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Distant Days
in Tipperary

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INNISFAIL

OR

Distant Days in Tipperary

BY

REV. P. HICKEY

THIRD EDITION



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TO THE
PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE ORPHANS
OF
ST. JOHN'S ORPHANAGE, NEWTOWN, NEAR ALBURY,
NEW SOUTH WALES,
THIS LITTLE BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
BY THE AUTHOR.

P. HICKEY.

REV. P. HICKEY,
COROWA,
NEW SOUTH WALES.

All profits to be given to Newtown Orphanage.

189242



Innísfaíl, or Distant Days in Tipperary.



CHAPTER I.

CALVARY.

“GOOD night, Mrs. Hogan, and I hope your husband is better,” said the doctor as he pulls off his gloves and proceeds to warm his hands at the wretched fire in the cheerless fire-place. He had driven a long distance through the rain, but was quite cheerful, for he was one of that good-natured kind who forget their own troubles at the sight of another’s pain.

“Ah, doctor, I grieve to say he has not been well lately. Since the nourishment failed he has been getting gradually weaker. For a few days we had chickens enough, and the neighbours were so generous. Now they are nearly all sick themselves, and with nothing

but fever and hunger everywhere 'tis a gloomy prospect we have got to face."

With blanched cheeks and suppressed tears that devoted woman looks the picture of agony. Her three eldest boys are slowly recovering. Her two girls are not old enough to be of much help; and with three small children, one of them only twelve months old, what wonder at such a sight that the doctor's heart is touched with pity?

The room occupied by the patient is large, cold, and bleak. Excepting a few creaking chairs and a painful apology for a bed there is no furniture in the place. Judged by the prolonged examination the case is serious. The doctor, however, seems hopeful. He gently gives his directions, comforts that sorrowful woman, and sympathetically bids good-bye to that lonely dwelling. An hour later the last sacraments are administered. On the damp clay floor kneels God's anointed servant, and from a heart filled with paternal affection issues forth a salutary tide of supplication for the corporal and spiritual relief of an afflicted brother. By angel hands are the golden petitions carried before the great white throne. Consolation descends, and, refreshed with the heavenly dew of absolution, the sick man's

soul is clothed with the alb of innocence, and worthy of admittance to the halls of heaven. Oh! glorious, zealous, unselfish Irish priesthood, ever true to your high vocation—great on the judgment day before the assembled nations will be your reward, and grand, even on earth, your consolation in working for the salvation of a people the most loyal to the faith the world has ever known. Poor in earthly goods the Irish are rich in their love of the supernatural and in that strong bond of charity that for centuries of persecution and famine bound together the sheep and shepherds.

Who in the winter's night,
 Soggarth, aroon,
 When the cold blast did bite,
 Soggarth, aroon,
 Came to my cabin door,
 And on my earthen floor,
 Knelt by me sick and poor,
 Soggarth, aroon?

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Who as friend only met,
 Soggarth, aroon,
 Never did flout me yet
 Soggarth, aroon,
 And when my heart was dim
 Gave while his eye did brim,
 What I should give to him,
 Soggarth, aroon?

Before he leaves Father Tom tenderly puts two sovereigns into an emaciated hand. Not a word is spoken. Language was never framed to adequately express the religious grandeur of the pathetic scene. During the night there is no repose for that pathetic nurse. Stealthily from one room to another does she move. Behold how carefully she notices every change; see how tenderly she bathes the aching forehead. The next moment sees her carrying a drink to the parched tongue and lips. Talk of heroism; talk of charity; talk of nobility—there they are all in their perfection possessed by a poverty-stricken Irish farmer's wife. Enter your European Courts; go into the mansions of the millionaire; inspect the lives and surroundings of the nobility, and nowhere among them can you find the pious simplicity, the providential confidence, and the gospel fidelity to the marriage vow that you invariably find in every Irish cabin. Ah, yes! the Irish peasants are, above all things, pure, and though severely scourged betimes, the scourge methinks that lacerates their flesh must have somewhere concealed in it a healing drop from the heart of Christ.

But to our subject. Her experienced eye already detects symptoms of fever in another

member of the family. One by one she fears they may all be stricken down. To keep awake she steps out into the chilly air, looks wistfully towards the sphinx-like stars, but receives no response. Beside the bed of pain again she takes her place. Completely exhausted through work and thought, and deeply sighing for consolation, she throws herself on her knees before a dusty statue of the Blessed Virgin, and, passionately pressing to her lips a broken crucifix, she finds herself in the hallowed clime of Palestine, and beside Him who by His life and death sanctified that holy land. Peter and James and John are there. In company with them she listens with reverential awe to these touching words: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death. Stay you here and watch with Me. Ah, yes, stay you for a short time to keep Me company. All the weighty darkness of hell seeks to-night to crush Me. The skill and force of Satan's legions will be brought against Me. One of My chosen twelve will betray Me. The road to Calvary I see crimsoned with My blood. My brow already feels the agony of the envenomed crown. My shoulders twitch beneath the cross. The flesh I assumed to redeem mankind is lacerated by those for whose salvation I am about to die. Those hands so

often raised in benediction will soon be torn with the iron nails. And this heart of Mine that has always loved men so well will soon pour forth its last drop to prove the intensity of My affection for them. Stay you, therefore, with Me. My humanity sighs for human sympathy; and to whom, if not to My friends, am I to appeal in this the hour of My greatest sorrow." Faithfully with Christ does that peasant woman watch and pray. The awful tragedy lies before her. Slowly down her cheeks the big soft tears are falling. Time after time she sees her Saviour crushed to earth through the weight of the cross. But the hill at length is reached; the crucifixion is finished; the sacrifice is consummated; the thunder and lightnings cease; and, as she intently gazes on the disfigured face of the dead Christ, she calmly falls asleep beside the statue, still holding with a death-like clasp her broken crucifix.

CHAPTER II.

THE STATION.

“ ’Tis a fierce morning, but I suppose there is nothing for it but to take the bull by the horns. The soldiers will be there, and it would never do for the captain to show the white feather. Dan, put in the mare, and bring your frieze coat to keep your blood in circulation.”

A few minutes later Father Tom is on his way to the Station. Dan seems out of sorts ; but the priest pretends to take no notice of his bad humour.

“ ’Tis well for you, Dan, that you never aspired to Holy Orders. Had you joined the ranks of the clergy you’d have a long fast this cold morning and a sharp appetite for your breakfast before you’d get it.”

“ And how do you know that I am a bit better fortified internally than you are yourself ? (Dan was a lover of big words.) The fact of the matter is that Miss Mary will soon be after thinking the whole place belongs to her herself—stock, lock, and barrel. Of course I hadn’t a bite or sup before we left Faith, ’tis often I think the priests give a little too much

latitude and longitude to their housekeepers. If they only kept them in their place in the commencement it might be possible to break them in properly. But there's no halt to their gallop if they get the bit between their teeth at the start."

"You're a wise man, Dan, and I'll take care you'll get something more palatable than Mary's treatment as soon as we reach our destination. In the meantime I must ask you, like a good man, to give me a period of dead silence to collect my thoughts before saying Mass."

The petition is graciously granted. With great heart and spirit the well-bred mare, with glossy coat and electric ear, steps along gaily. Dan takes great pride in the turnout, and majestically grand his mien as he sweeps the way from all competitors. The entire landscape is thickly covered with snow, so that the poor silenced groom gently cracks the whip occasionally, and, more frequently than necessary, diplomatically urges Bessie "to go on there now," just by way of keeping his tongue from becoming rusty and to vary the monotony of the situation. During the remainder of the journey the priest's thoughts are centred on the spiritual and temporal condition of his people. Dan's meditations are more confined. He has no congregation to account for; no "crasshackling" spouse to drive him

into the asylum ; no frivolous sweetheart to be making game of him ; and no vixen of a mother-in-law to give him a moderate collation of purgatory before he dies. " Ha, Ha ! " thinks Dan, deeply. " Take my word for it, they're all alike. Many and many and many a time do I think of what Uncle John, God rest his spirit, used to often say to me. ' Dan,' he used to say : ' Ah ! Dan, avic, do you heed me ? Be very cautious Dan before you finally select your partner. And even when you're married, Dan, 'tis then you'll want to keep your weather eye open and all your wits about you. Perhaps they can't help it, the *craythurs*,' he used to say, ' it may be natural. But let me tell you, Dan, before it may be too late ; 'tis this, Dan, there's a *sinisther* vein of Eve in every *faymale*.' And I'll go bail, thought Dan, but the man was right ? There's that personificated hypnotist of a house-keeper, as sleek as a pet reindeer and as fragrant as a honeysuckle, with her simpering ' Yes, Father,' and ' No, Father,' to the priests ; but you see the capers the virago cuts in the kitchen, or see her at the door when some poor *anaghshore* comes for charity, and you might take your solemn oath she was one of Satan's *aidykongs* just out on her father's mission. Begob, it is very *aisy* to blind the priests in some things—

devilish *aisy*," thought Dan intensely. Here Dan's contemplations are abruptly interrupted. The Station is reached. The people, notwithstanding the sleet, have turned up in large numbers. A cosy confessional chair stands beside the fire for the priest. The confessions are soon finished, for the penitents are all regular communicants and honest people. Many of them were once well-to-do, but, owing to bad times, sickness, poor prices, and inhuman land laws, they are nearly all now on the verge of insolvency. During the oblation of the divine mysteries their fond pastor seems to be infusing his heart and soul into every sentence. He is thinking all the time of their great faith, their pure lives, and impoverished condition. And while thanking heaven for this sanctity, he ardently supplicates the Sacred Heart before him for the grace of resignation to God's will in their regard, and for the gift of final perseverance for them. And yet you often hear it said that a priest's life must be very lonely. Lonely ; with God always to commune with ; with his angel guardian always at his side ; with the court of heaven for his companionship ; with the souls he saved praying for him ; with the converted sinners blessing him ; and with all creation from her myriad fountains pouring in on his soul an

uninterrupted paradise of rest and happiness. Towards the end of the Mass Father Tom addresses a few paternal words to the congregation. He heartily sympathises with them in their afflictions, and tells them not to allow any one among them sick of fever to want for anything while he had a shilling to his credit. "And even though I should'nt have it myself, I'll get it for you. You call me Father, and a considerate Father I promise I will always be to you. God's hand at present lies heavy on you. Tyranny is rampant, vice is triumphant, virtue is clothed with rags; but this is not the end. The High Priests and the Scribes and the Pharisees had their day. Which of you would exchange your chance for theirs in the next world? The Apostles were put to death. They are all now, with the exception of the traitor, in God's kingdom. Have courage; bear your cross manfully, although 'tis heavy; the weight will soon be lifted, for the journey's end is nearing, and the poverty, the fever, and the agony you are enduring will serve to clear for you a golden passage into heaven, where for never-ending ages you will thank your Eternal Father that you have been deemed worthy in His divine providence to suffer severely here on earth for the sake and the cause of Jesus Christ."

CHAPTER III.

A CHILD'S DEATH AND FUNERAL.

THE first of January, 1860, dawns upon at least one afflicted home in Tipperary. The life of Johanna Hogan, a child five years of age, is fast drawing to a close. Her once rosy cheeks have lost their colour, and the bright eyes have become dim and death-like. Shortly before she breathes her last earthly breath she is carried round to bid farewell to her father and brothers, still confined to bed. One by one they all embrace her. Again and again that strong minded, but religiously affectionate, parent presses to his heart his beloved child. She is the first God has taken from him, and, though big tears that might as well be drops of blood trickle down his cheeks, with humble resignation he calmly accepts the painful sacrifice. "To the Three Divine Persons of the Blessed Trinity I give you back Johanna, with but this request : that you will not forget in Heaven's happy halls the bleak home and the troubled hearts you left behind you." The next moment the pathetic

look from her dying—dead—eyes seemed to say :
“ Be patient, father, we will all meet again.”

Twenty-four hours later a grave receives a small, roughly put together coffin, and the man that made them both is now, though half against his heart, shovelling in the clay over the remains of his master's child. His heavy task finished, he feels himself tied to the place by some invisible agency. Sadly he strolls away from the newly made grave, but as often as he finds himself at the stile he involuntarily turns back again. What is now a graveyard was once a chapel; but there is no vestige of an altar at present. The side walls are no longer visible, the wide gables are fast falling to pieces, human skulls and bones in two or three large heaps are miscellaneously piled together. The greater portion of them belonged to the heroes who fell at Lochnafulla and the men and women who died along the public roads and by the ditches in the neighbourhood of famine and fever in the bad times. Oh! what an invincible cry for justice from those shrieking skeletons against the pampered British despot on the day of judgment. The tall silver poplars are constantly swaying to and fro, casting by day their distinct slender shadows around the place, and perpetually sighing through the night their

mournful dirge above the tombs. The kind Samaritan is bewildered with weird thoughts that oppress his brain. Sitting meditatively upon a low headstone he recalls to mind one of Mangan's poems, which made an indelible impression on his young ardent heart when he first read it—

Musing of life, and death and fate,
I slowly passed along, heedless of aught around,
— Till on the hill, now, alas ! ruin-crowned,
Lo ! the old abbey-gate !

Dim in the pallid moonlight stood,
Crumbling to slow decay, the remnant of that pile
Within which dwelt so many saints erewhile
In loving brotherhood !

Alas, alas ! how dark the change,
Now round its mouldering walls, over its pillars low,
The grass grows rank, the yellow gowans blow,
Looking so sad and strange !

Oh ! woe, that Wrong should triumph thus ;
Woe that the olden right, the rule and the renown
Of the pure souled and meek should thus go down
Before the Tyrannous !

Alas ! I rave ! if change is here,
Is it not o'er the land ? Is it not too in me ?
Yes. I am changed even more than what I see,
Now, is my last goal near.

My worn limbs fail, my blood moves cold—

Dimness is on mine eyes. I have seen my children die ;

They lie where I too in brief space shall lie

Under the grassy mould.

Mournfully he leaves the churchyard for the abode of poverty and affliction. Typhus fever holds command of every room in that lonely dwelling. Not a soul comes near the place. Every one shuns the home where the dreadful disease rages ; even those passing by the infected spot are wont to take notice of the quarter from which the wind is blowing. For thirteen weary weeks Mrs. Hogan is the only nurse in attendance on her husband and children, sick of fever. Observing her exhausted condition the big-hearted Protestant doctor sends from town a trained nurse to help her. Words, however eloquent, could never express that poor woman's gratitude.

Fervently day and night she prays for his conversion. And when, after coming twenty-eight times a distance of four miles in all kinds of weather, he sends a bill for only five guineas, her fervent prayers are redoubled and her joy and thankfulness indescribable. What a pity, she thinks, such a charitable man shouldn't die a Catholic. But, perhaps, even though he does not become a convert, God may save him as a

good-living *bonâ fide* Protestant. He belongs, if not to the body, at least to the soul of the church. He is full of charity, full of kindness, resplendent with generosity; and with such grand qualities who so narrow-minded as to find fault with Mrs. Hogan's heartfelt prayer that the genial doctor's spirit may bask in the golden delights of the beatific vision for endless ages?

CHAPTER IV.

BALLYCOHEY AND KNOCKNAGOW.

“WELL, Hogan, there is no use in beating any longer about the bush. The die is cast, and out you go. Benson has definitely made up his mind ; your lease has expired, and let me tell you that for the consideration you have received you ought to be more grateful.”

“Grateful ? ”

“Yes. He might have dispossessed your father-in-law as well, and left you all without a foot of land or a roof above you.”

What a concession ! Grateful for the privilege of being publicly robbed ! Grateful for being sent adrift from the place owned for centuries by his wife’s ancestors ! Grateful for being evicted at the hands of an abandoned profligate, and grateful for being the recipient of the barbarous atrocities of British vandalism ! And yet, strange to say, that motley cluster appear resigned. Parents and children bid farewell to the old house in which every child in that group was born. The household goods, such as they

are, are carted away to the grandfather's place by the three eldest boys. The five other children, with their parents, slowly wend their way towards the same pensive destination. With downcast eyes the gipsy-like procession moves along. The pilgrimage ends at the hospitable door of the venerable patriarch. With big sad tears in his soft blue eyes he embraces each. Not a word is uttered, and when, last of all, he takes the emaciated figure of his brave daughter to his heart, oh! how intense his pain, for he feels he holds but an animated skeleton in his fond embrace.

"My poor child! Has it come to this? Hunger and fever have told their tale, and human rapacity has done the rest. But in God's name let us not despair. No one has here a lasting habitation. We are all seeking for one to come. There are no bailiffs to evict the poor man's soul from heaven; and thanks be to the good God, Tom, there are upon your honest fingers no murdered drops to be wiped away."

Never have two men, similarly situated, agreed better than Tom Hogan and Martin Flynn. The younger—calm, prudent, almost ascetic—is simple as a child in all his dealings with the other. On Sunday mornings the most comfortable seat in the car that takes the family to Mass is

religiously set apart for the old man. Patiently Tom Hogan waits before the altar while his father-in-law goes through his usual litany of devotions, long after the congregation has left the church. On the way home they invariably discuss the sermon, and always speak of the preacher with great respect. Both are highly educated. In their young days they had educational opportunities within the reach of only the privileged few among the farming classes. One has a son a priest, the other has a brother and several cousins in Holy Orders. Tom Hogan pays his annual visit to Mount Melleray to "make his soul," and has been heard more than once regretting that he might have to accuse himself of having refused a call which he suspected was offered him in youth—to consecrate his life to God's service. Be that as it may, Tom Hogan is a straight, upright, honest man. Had the eviction taken place before he and his family had been laid prostrate some crimson stains might have marked the occasion. Nor would Tom Hogan be the first conscientious man in Tipperary, made desperate by savage treatment, that had taken the execution of the law into his own hands. He sees the county squeezed to death by tyrants. There is no fixity of tenure. Every improvement the

hard-working tenant makes furnishes only an additional temptation to the landlord to raise the rent or mercilessly eject the tenant.

The barbarous code is backed up by British bayonets. Like mobs of cattle are the tenants driven to vote for brutes who, the day after election, may kick them out to die, unpitied, of fever or famine under the hedges or along the public roads. Because in an humble manner Tom Hogan implores his evictor for a small compensation he is threatened that, unless he keeps a civil tongue between his cheeks, he will soon have the satisfaction of seeing his father-in-law's farm taken over to keep company with its lately confiscated comrade. For the sake of his wife and family Tom Hogan curbs his feelings. All the same, because he dared address his landlord, however suppliantly, he is roughly advised by Benson's agent that Martin Flynn's rental is raised five shillings an acre, and that, should the slightest provocation be given, the two holdings will become, at a day's notice, the landlord's property. "What, in God's name," exclaims heart-broken Hogan, "are the four archbishops and all the other Irish clergy doing? Are they afraid, or is it that, being snug and comfortable in their own cosy palaces, they take no heed of the ravages wrought

throughout the country? Our poor country priests are almost to a man with us, but what can they do? They must obey. Ah, me! 'tis true for Father Tom. If there were more 'Ballycoheys' there would not be so many Knocknagows in Tipperary."

CHAPTER V.

A TIPPERARY FOX HUNT.

“HURROO, hurroo! There they go after the fox like the very devil. Billy, tell the lads quick, and get your hat.” Scarcely has Jack Hogan given expression to the foregoing than he has located himself in a very primitive saddle, strapped on a horse’s back within the shortest time on record. A few minutes later he is gradually clearing his way through scattered crowds, rushing with breathless pace after the Tipperary hounds. Before him the well-groomed horses are careering along like flying machines. Devil-may-care Jack Hogan, in defiance of all club regulations, is soon in the midst of the huntsmen. Neither he nor Diamond ever raced before in such distinguished company. At a good distance the fox, hotly pursued, glides along at top speed. He has already run a distance of two miles, and is aiming straight for the nearest cover, three miles ahead. See him now, as he jumps into a drain, scattering the trail in all directions. Under culverts and through narrow water-courses and thick set

hedges does he scramble to delay and deceive the hounds. Right clean over the stone walls jump the horses. The big double ditches are beautifully negotiated. Out again on the green sward. Oh! what delight to hear the hounds yelping, the horsemen shouting, and to witness that healthy manifestation of unalloyed enjoyment. What a pity all classes and creeds in Ireland cannot be got to unite as at this day's hunt! Among them you have Irish officers who gained distinction in British India; Irish landlords who, for the time being, forget evictions; private gentlemen who live at peace with all the world; and a light-hearted, hare-heeled, miscellaneous crowd for whom, while the hunt continues, the past and future have no significance. Deep drains are cleared at a single bound. Slowly the ploughed land is cleared. Five open fields separated from one another by a high double ditch, with a wide deep drain at each side, have to be dealt with before the fox reaches the cover. With every stride he seems to be gaining courage; all his skill is brought into action, all his resources put to the best advantage, and with every inch he covers he appears to be mathematically calculating the space in front, and utilising diplomatically every atom of energy

he can command. Dikes and ditches are crossed in quick succession. School boys of all ages, whose books are scattered over many a townland, are there in large numbers. The fox is now within ten yards of the last obstacle. With a cunning plunge into the water, a sly manœuvre through the briery thicket, a well-deserved rest there for about five seconds, out he jumps with a final bid for life. The hounds closest in pursuit soon become entangled in the bushes. A wise old fox-terrier, however, utilising his eye more than his nose, gives the thicket a wide berth, and shapes his course in a direct line behind the fugitive's heels. Close at hand races Diamond neck for neck with the whipper-in. Twenty strides more and all is over. Inch by inch is the distance between the pursuers and pursued becoming shorter. Racing with all his might, and with a wild Tipperary roar, Jack Hogan gallops between the fox and cover. The terrier and whipper-in are up to time; and thus, despite his all but preternatural struggle, plucky but destructive Reynard encounters his Waterloo.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SCHOOLHOUSE.

IN tone and language there is no book so much like the New Testament as the "Imitation of Christ." Open it at random, and if the part that meets the eye does not suit your case, let me say that, from my experience, your case must be exceptional. The charming little work is a great favourite with Mrs. Hogan, who has always kept a copy. The morning after the hunt, in a sort of hazy manner, Jack takes up the volume, and when he is directly confronted with "A merry night makes a sorrowful morning," who can blame him for being convinced that Thomas a'Kempis had Jack Hogan's case vividly before his mind whilst penning the above sentence? Though his mother forgave him for leaving the plough idle, some busybody, he fears, may tell his father when the latter returns from Melleray, where he has been spending a few days in spiritual contemplation. Though an expert horseman, it cannot be maintained that Jack possesses the scientific acumen of Sir Isaac Newton, nor has it ever been satisfactorily

demonstrated that his intellectual powers are as deep or varied as William Shakespeare's. Besides, the hunt was not calculated to increase his scholastic knowledge; so that it is with a sick heart and feelings akin to those of a condemned-to-death criminal that he takes up his loathsome books, and sullenly marches off to school. In Chinese order, himself, three younger brothers and a sister, like Puritan pilgrims, tread the dolorous road. For these and other children the schoolhouse and the master are the two most hated objects in existence—the Alpha and Omega of juvenile torture, agony, and despair. Here and there, at intervals, along the gloomy way the Hogans join other batches, just as cheerless and despondent as themselves. They all seem to realise that punishment awaits them. Willingly would each sacrifice a year of his life for every day allowed away from school. That the master is very stern cannot be denied; that he is as severe as the children think can scarcely be denied either. God help the shivering creatures the day he is in bad humour, and Heaven pity the pupil, whatever his excuse, who comes late. This morning the “dire disasters” are there in myriads. Some think he must have

taken a drop the previous night ; others that he must have had a tiff with the *Missus*. Patsy Doolan, however, knows better. About five o'clock, long before any of the neighbours were up, as he was going with a creel of fat pigs to the fair of Brittas, he saw two heifers and an ass treating themselves to a free passage through the only stack of oats, and that reserved for seed, in the master's haggard. By sounding the alarm Patsy would have made friends for himself with the master for many a long day in school after, but what would that be in comparison with the unalloyed luxury he momentarily extracts from his congenial meditations on the tantalising and vexatious injury inflicted by the dumb beasts on the enemy's property. The boys who left the school for the hunt are summoned to take their stand in the dock. They have no advocate ; no impartial judge to see that they get justice. Their adversary is Crown prosecutor, judge and jury all in one. The younger culprits are let off with a comparatively light sentence. They receive two telling cuts of the cane on each hand, after which they are penalised to kneel erect with their faces to the wall for half an hour. The older boys are

more severely punished. Jack Hogan is the last to toe the scratch. Just as he is about to receive a merciless thrashing the door opens and a throb of gladness fills the school at the sight of the ever-welcome features of Father Healy.

Putting as fair a face as he can upon the situation, the enraged Nabob suddenly becomes bland and gracious. In language that would do credit to a Chesterfield master, Hogan is requested to take charge of the priest's horse. Jack is the boy for the billet. Father Healy is a saintly man—big-hearted, sympathetic, and exceptionally fond of schools and children. Two or three, however, of his brother priests have been suspected of saying among themselves, of course (if it happened at all), that he is not, like some they could mention, a brilliant classical scholar or a very profound theologian. He is, however, a great favourite with the people, and has always been held in high esteem by his great Archbishop. He keeps clear of politics and all learned discussions, loves nothing more than giving consolation at the bedside to the sick and dying, spends long hours in the confessional, and, though of a somewhat quick temperament, the heat is always founded on charity, and contains

not a particle of revenge or malice. Where, let me ask, will your great men of mark be in comparison with painstaking, humble, zealous priests of the Father Healy type in the Judgment Valley ?

CHAPTER VII.

JACK IN EVIDENCE.

“WELL, mother, put me at anything else you like—thinning turnips, wheeling out turf, weeding the potatoes, quarrying stones—and I’ll not complain. But inside the school again never will I go.”

“Jack, what in God’s name is the matter with you?”

“The matter is this: I hate the master; I hate the schoolhouse; I hate my books. Inside the door I’ll never set foot, except to have a shy with something harder than a boiled potato at the devil’s skull.”

“But your father will be home on Saturday, and you know how determined he is.”

“I do. But ye don’t know how determined I am. I will ’list, become a jockey, sweep chimneys, or face hell itself and all the devils there before ever I go back to school again. We couldn’t be treated worse if we were Turks or asses.

I wouldn't like to see my father vexed, but, vexed or no vexed, I'll chance death before I'll go again to school."

For once in his life Jack means business, and his mother sees it. How to so arrange matters with her husband that Jack's surrender may be prevented is now the poor woman's critical perplexity. Even with his own family Tom Hogan is very distant. His word is law; his command never disobeyed or questioned. To-morrow evening he is expected home, and being naturally supposed after his retreat to be in the state of grace, and consequently in good humour, he will, Mrs. Hogan hopes, be comparatively easily managed.

Diamond galloped so creditably after the fox that several of the huntsmen took a great fancy to him, and two or three of them were ready to give a big price for him. For farming purposes he isn't worth much. He is well bred though, splendidly shaped, very good in a threshing machine, but is, whenever he likes, which is very often, a vexatious "stopper," even in the plough. At the present time thirty pounds would be thirty pounds to Tom Hogan. But not for three times thirty would Mrs. Hogan let her husband know that his will had been in his absence disobeyed

The previous week John Maloney, family draper, sent in his bill for twenty pounds, with interest added for six months overdue. Con Ryan hasn't been fully paid yet for last season's bone manure and seed turnips. There must be a stiff account for groceries at Tim Harney's, and a regular eye-opener at Green's for flour, bran and pollard. Besides, notice for the half-year's rent may be expected at any moment. To meet these accounts the two lots of pigs aren't yet fat enough for sale, nor will the bullocks or sheep be fit for the butcher for a month or two. Under these circumstances forty or fifty pounds would be more acceptable to a poor man than a kick in the shin. What a temptation to tell her husband the whole story. But——

Next night, after the Rosary, and when all the family had retired to rest, Mrs. Hogan drinks in with delight at the fireside her husband's enthusiastic recital of his Mount Melleray experiences. He is gratified with his wife's ardent attention, little suspecting that the fond partner of his joys and sorrows is cunningly playing her card all the time with highly commendable dexterity.

“You have no idea of the place. It is a little paradise. Lovely walks, beautiful avenues, splendid buildings, a most devotional

chapel, and a big-hearted Irish welcome for everyone. Father Alexis, they say, is one of the best classical scholars in Munster. Poor old Father Ignatius is a walking saint, and Father Paul the most celebrated confessor in Ireland. To listen to the singing at High Mass or Vespers you'd think you were, heart and soul, in another world. While I was there I never knew an hour to pass that I didn't think what a blessing it is from God to be a priest or monk in that heavenly home."

All this time Mrs. Hogan's undivided attention is not confined to the holy men in the famous Cistercian Monastery. The great classical scholarship of the world has never had any interest for her. Though not a learned woman, Mrs. Hogan is a good, careful housekeeper, an amiable daughter, a faithful wife, and although, perhaps, a little too indulgent, an excellent mother. In their heart of hearts she is intensely beloved by all her children. While raking the fire, and with her back towards her husband, in a very affectionate tone she thus addresses him: "Ah, Tom, though it is only a week since you went away, the place didn't seem like itself without you. The children, of course, were all obedient, but a house is nothing without a person in charge, and a

home is only confusion without the head. For the past three or four days I have been thinking with myself that it might be better to keep Jack at home from school altogether. He is too big to be going any longer. He never had any great liking for his books, and it isn't younger you're getting yourself, Tom. Wouldn't it be as well to take the world a little easy, and give Jack a share of your own hard work? I'm sure if he were only to get a few instructions from yourself at night he'd do much better at his lessons than he does at school. In any case they say he'll never be a scholar, so that if he isn't turned to something practical at once he may never be good for anything."

"If I thought the lazy fellow would only stick to work after a reasonable manner I would put a fork or a flail into his hands to-morrow morning. You may do just as you like with him. My opinion is that he will never die from overwork."

And thus, to the mother's delight, the important contract is irrevocably clinched. During the night Mrs. Hogan's sleep is somewhat scattered. And what wonder? She had a delicate part to play. But she obeyed her conscience, she gained her end, she saved the situation, she ignored herself, and worked only

for peace and harmony in the humble home. But . . . and, oh ! what an agony for a woman to even strive to keep a secret ! Before retiring to rest she had no chance of imparting the good news to her distracted child. Jack's sleep is a bit astray too. In less than ten minutes, in the boundless lands of dreams, he has jumped three-score stone walls, ten thousand drains, innumerable double ditches, traversed the whole county from Carrick-on-Suir to Keeper Hill, broken the master's head into smithereens, joyfully kicked his abominable books into imperceptible pieces, respectfully exercised Father Healy's horse, repeatedly rehearsed his scholastic ultimatum to his mother, and winds up with torturing his brain, such as it is, for a definite solution of the insoluble enigma of juvenile futurity. The fact is, Jack's heart is too big, or, perhaps, too good, for his head. But why blame Jack for that ? Besides, were there no foolish people, your wise men could not be distinguished. Better any day the heart to rule the head than that the head should despotically rule or absorb the heart. Over all virtues charity, like a benign queen, reigns supreme. Intellect, undisciplined by charity or humility, is

of man's soul the most insidious foe. The meanest fallen angel possesses more head—that is, let us say, more intelligence—than all your Platos, Homers, Cæsars, Bacons, and Shakespeares put together. Human wisdom is for the most part in the face of heaven only another name for folly, and the humble man's actions, animated by faith and enriched by charity, give delight to his fellow-creatures, and continuously plead for him like so many eloquent advocates at the feet of Christ in His Father's Kingdom.

Next morning, and at a very early hour, just as the skylark in the soft green clover fields leaves his dewy nest, and with abnormally extensive rapture for so small a heart wings his musical flight towards the clouds, palpitating Jack Hogan steals out from his fraternal companions, and with an almost femininely plaintive note, most skilfully intonated, whispers at the next door “Mother.”

Needless to say that the wished for response is immediately given.

“Mother, mother, I scarcely ever closed an eye all night. Oh! for God's sake let me hear you say you have good news for me.”

“ Yes, Jack, I have. You need never go to school again.”

After Jack had most affectionately kissed his mother, they both quietly sneak back to their respective rooms.

CHAPTER VIII.

DIAMOND.

“HOGAN, I have come to have a look at that bay horse of yours. They tell me he is a good jumper. If so, unless you are too hard, it is likely to be a deal.”

This is Jack's critical moment. He knows the high opinion the hunters have of Diamond. Will he allow his father to be taken in or will he summon up courage and come to the rescue. Should he allow the golden opportunity to pass he may have cause to regret his action. Should he dare interfere in his father's business he may have more reason to regret his temerity. You, dear reader, would have long since, as a matter of course, broken the news about the hunt to Tom Hogan. Placed in Jack's position, do you think you would ?

“Better come and see the horse,” replies Tom Hogan to Colonel Tyson. While they are on their way to the stable they are overtaken by Jack, who, somewhat excitedly, puts into his father's hand a soiled envelope marked most urgent. After he has introduced the gallant

British officer and Diamond to each other he breaks the seal, and in a half-dazed manner gazes upon the contents of the letter. At first he is under the impression the whole affair is a hoax or a low design of some intriguer to ultimately get the horse for himself. The letter has neither stamp, date, nor post-mark. It runs thus :—

“Hogan. Ask a big price for your horse ; don’t sell him under forty.

“Yours, in haste,

“P. HEALY.”

Tom Hogan is bewildered. There is, to his knowledge, no man named Healy in the locality. Anyhow, he intends to act upon the suggestion.

“I have had a good look at the horse,” says the officer, “and I believe he is about the size for my weight. Before I ride him, by way of a trial, I’d like to know your price.”

“I’d prefer you’d take him over a stone-wall, a few wide drains, a furze fence, a double ditch or two, or anything you like, and come back and let me know what you conscientiously think the horse may be worth to you.”

“Conscientiously think !” hilariously roared the Colonel. “Why, Hogan, for the past twenty years I have never kept such a ghastly viper as a conscience in my knapsack. Even though I

hadn't thrown the reptile overboard long ago, to appease the sharks of human passions, don't you consider that I would be in duty bound, according to your Irish system, to give my conscience a holiday as often as I find myself engaged in selling a worthless brute or purchasing a good one? Never have I met an Irish horse-dealer that even pretended to have a conscience. In fact, I never knew one of your countrymen but in buying or selling a horse would not rob St. Peter. You've heard, of course, the story about the mountaineer who got rid of the blind mare at the last fair at Brittas. He solemnly pledged his word in the presence of several witnesses that the mare had no fault. The buyer took him at his word, and paid his money. The following day the angry buyer returns with the mare to her late proprietor.

“ ‘ You guaranteed yesterday that this mare had no fault ? ’

“ ‘ Yes, I did.’

“ ‘ And at that time were you aware she was blind of an eye ? ’

“ ‘ Of course I was.’

“ ‘ How then, in the name of conscience, can you reconcile yourself with your conduct ? ’

“ ‘ In this way,’ replied the seller. ‘ In the first place, the mare cannot help being blind—

it is not her fault; it is only her misfortune. In the second place, there is only one place fit for those who expect justice in connection with horse-dealing in Ireland, and that place is not the fair or market, but the nursery or the lunatic asylum.'

"The innocent dealer should imitate the prudent example of the man with the egg-shell skull, who, in the days when faction fights were rife in the premier county, cautiously gave on all public occasions a wide berth to Ballingarry.

"Hogan, you'd never make a successful general. Your conscience would be constantly coming between your foe and your rifle. 'Conscientiously think!' again exclaimed the Colonel. Why, even your own clergymen, whom you deem the pink of honesty, regard the taking in of one another in equine transactions as an almost virtuous accomplishment. Conscientiously think! Why that devotional rogue Healy sold Captain French a mare the other day for fifty pounds. With his reverence in the saddle she'd clear the Devil's Bit. As soon as French took charge she'd scarcely jump at all. I told him to sprinkle a few drops of holy water over her, and I'm damned but from that day to this she clears the ditches and stone walls like a bird.

But then French is a Holy Roman ; I'm only a Saxon heretic ; that makes all the difference. Look here, Hogan, were I to treat old Slasher to such an ecclesiastical irrigation he'd have his revenge by making currant jam of my head against the first stone wall. Well, Diamond, old boy, you have a costlier bit in your mouth now, and a more fashionable bridle around your cranium, and I suppose, Hogan, a better—well I'll not say more—but a better jockey on your back than ever you had before."

Tom Hogan gently nods assent.

"He is a bit thin," says the Colonel, as he starts off at a slow canter. The first jump, about twelve or thirteen feet wide, is beautifully cleared. The rider already appreciates his mount. At a moderate pace Diamond is brought to a stone wall and several dykes and fences, all of which he manages in splendid style. By this the Colonel is superbly happy. With the pace, as well as with Diamond's jumping capabilities, he is more than satisfied. Lightly springing out of the saddle, taking the horse stiffly by the wind-pipe for three or four seconds, holding the bridle rein at full length in front, keenly surveying the ample forehead, the intelligent eye, the dilated nostrils, the powerful chest, and putting back the rein over the horse's

neck, the man seems to be saying, through every motion and every fibre of his person, "What a noble animal."

"Hogan, though I have never seen you before, I can tell by your face that you are a decent man. Put a fair price—not too much—on the horse, and I'll pay you on the spot."

"For my work I cannot say Diamond is exceptionally good. But until you came here I had no thought of selling him. But for your work—for hunting—judging from the way I have seen him race and clear fences, there are very few horses his superior in the whole country. He would never be worth fifty pounds to me; he will be worth more than that to you. At that price, sir, you may have him."

"'Tis a big sum, but I must say he is a great horse. Throw off ten pounds and it's a bargain."

"No. I cannot."

"Throw off five then, and the horse is mine."

Tom Hogan rises to the occasion, with a firm manly voice he replies: "Yes. The horse is yours, and may good luck attend you and him on all occasions."

"Hogan, do you know the rough stone-breasted fence, about half a mile or so to the right?"

"Yes."

‘ With the exception of that I gallantly took everything that came in my way. I didn’t feel justified in sending him at it. Diamond and I must not commence to make experiments until we are more intimately acquainted.’

Jack, who has been present with his father during the whole transaction, is being consumed with anxiety for the special chance. Colonel Tyson’s sharp eye takes in the situation. “ The horse is mine now, Hogan ; you have your money. My gay young lad, if you jump Diamond over that stone-breasted ditch I’ll give your father the full fifty. No. He’s paid ; but if you carry him safely over that obstacle I’ll make a present to you of five golden sovereigns.”

Not for the sake of the money, but for the sake of Auld Lang Syne, Jack undertakes the task. With an electric spring he finds himself in the saddle on Diamond’s back. The pace is very slow at the beginning. The Colonel is almost crazy with delight as he sees how stylishly Diamond clears everything. The officer is cantering about twenty or thirty yards behind his new purchase, and, as the big savage-looking ditch looms ominously in the distance, he almost regrets that he ever entrusted the execution of such a critical commission to young Hogan. With unbounded confidence

Diamond and his rider face their work. There is a genuinely altruistic, sympathetic understanding between them. On duty together they are part and parcel of one another. Simultaneously they prepare for the unique achievement. With ears extended, eyes riveted on the ditch, the war-like horse advances with consummate coolness, judgment, and decision. Needless to say that Diamond's rider is equally cool, judicious, and decisive. Faster and faster becomes the pace, and with a soft confidential expression of encouragement from the rider, which goes from heart to heart, the majestic steed makes the gigantic bound, tops the dangerous ditch about two feet beyond the highest row of stones, and, when in the act of landing, as lightly as a greyhound, on the other side he gently gives, in a somewhat sympathetic way, with his near hind foot a farewell touch to the stone-faced double ditch.

Diamond has become the property of the gallant Colonel. Jack is the recipient of five sovereigns. The buyer and seller are equally delighted. They have good reason; but—from another point of view, with, let us generously confess, equal justification—there are two very moist eyes and one very lonely heart to-night in Tipperary.

CHAPTER IX.

DOMESTICITY.

“GOD save all here and bless your work” is Judy Mallon’s salutation as she steps into Mrs. Hogan’s and sees Tom’s worthy wife knitting a comfortable pair of stockings for her husband.

“God save you kindly, Judy, and, to tell you the truth, I am very glad to see you. It was only yesterday I was beginning to fear we had done something to offend you. You know as long as we have anything to spare while poor Billy is sickly you need never be shy or ashamed to come for it. In fact, Judy, there isn’t one in the house but would rather go short than see Billy in need of proper nourishment. He was up here last Monday. He and Arthur are good friends. I felt lonely as I watched them strolling about the fields—in through the old castle, and in and out several times through the churchyard. I don’t believe there’s a single inscription but they have by heart. Sometimes I think they will die young, and yet ’tis wonderful what life they seem to have when they’re stirred up. Arthur has been advised to give

up school altogether and keep out in the fresh air as much as possible. We have him out saving the hay to-day. But it is only to pretend that we don't notice his illness. If Billy could only get plenty of new milk and chicken broth, and a little fresh meat, it is possible he might get as strong as ever."

"Well, to tell you the truth, Mrs. Hogan, 'tis many a day since I gave up all hope. I had him at the dispensary yesterday, and the doctor told me he might live for years. My own opinion is that the most we can expect is another summer or two. Only for the generous neighbours and Arthur's company 't isn't far he'd be to-day from his young grave."

"But, Judy, I have never heard that any one belonging to you or his father ever died of consumption."

"No; nor I either. But isn't it time enough for the disease still?"

"Well, indeed, it is. Three of my own poor sisters died of it, so that it is not surprising that it has attacked some of my children. Many a time I devoutly thank God that all the others escaped. But, oh! you have no idea how I feel when I hear Arthur cough at night. When I hear the door closing after him as he goes out for a mouthful of fresh air I could almost give

my own life to cure him. The consumption, I'm afraid, is not the worst, but the smothering asthma and the rotten pipes that are wheezing and rattling day and night."

" Ah, yes; but look at all the others you have besides Arthur, I have no one but Billy, and when he dies I'll be left alone. But as poor Jack often, in his cheerful way, says when he comes in, ' Arrah, Judy, cheer up; no use in fretting. Poor Billy will be all right yet; 'tis time enough to bid the devil the time of day when we meet him.' Wisha, the deuce a child you ever reared with Jack's heart. But what's the use of complaining too much. Didn't Father Healy say last Sunday from the altar that every heart had its own sorrow, that every shoulder had its own cross to bear, and that it was only the one that wore the tight boot was the best judge of the spot where the boot pinched. And he also said that it was as hard for a rich man to go into heaven as for a camel to go through the eye of a cambric needle. Wisha, God forgive me, but the devil a time I ever hear him read Mass or preach but I think there must be something heavenly in his big heart. Oh! he is so gentle with the poor, and so kind to the sick, and so fond of the little children. Not a week does he let pass without calling to see

Billy. Some weeks he comes even two or three times, and takes him out in the sun, and tells him all about the next world, and talks to him in the same way as if Billy was one of his own brothers that was sick and that he hadn't seen for years. As soon as Father Healy goes Billy is as sad as sad can be. He walks in with his head down, and nearly always says—'I wonder, mother, will Jack Hogan or Arthur or Mary come down to-night?' Poor Jack; he hasn't a Hogan head, but his heart is as big as Killough Hill."

"Well, Judy, to tell you God's truth, I'd rather have him a bit extravagant and generous than too selfish and stingy. There are lots of mean people on earth without him. Every day of my life I advise them all to be kind and liberal; though I'm afraid if Jack or Arthur ever get rich, by chance or good luck, they'll never set out to be millionaires. And now, Judy, excuse me for being so thoughtless; I never asked you about the pigs. Jack told me they were getting the disorder."

"Well, one of them was as dead as a door nail when I went in to see them this morning. There he lay, looking me straight in the face, with his two eyes like two glass marbles. At first I thought he was only up to tricks, but when I

put my hand on him he was as stiff as a poker from head to tail. Two of the others are in the recovery room, and another pair are working away in convulsions. 'Tis nice treatment they're handing me out over the counter for all the new potatoes and bran and pollard they got to cover their ribs and stop their squealing during the summer. If they only had the common decency to die when they were only slips, what matter? But, I suppose, as Tim Flanagan said when he buried the missus, 'there's no help for misfortune, but marry again.' "

"May God help you, Judy, 'tis hard luck you're having lately. But in any case you may rely on Jack and Patsy Doolan to till the garden and put in the crop for nothing. By the way, is it a fact that Ellen Hartigan is going to get married on Tuesday next? I think I saw two of her sisters once; they were both handsome."

"They couldn't be sisters to Ellen then, for if it was a sin to be ugly Ellen would be damned beyond redemption. As it must be getting on for ten o'clock now, you'd better give me the gallon. I have put a bit of butter and a few fresh eggs in the basket for yourself and Billy. Tell him to be sure to come up next Sunday. Arthur appears to like him better than all the boys that come about. It is, I suppose, because

they are both so delicate. I never thought any one could be worse than Arthur till I saw Billy. His cough is like a sound from the grave."

"But you never heard him cough about three or four in the morning."

"No."

"Well, I have. 'Twould pierce your soul and melt the heart of an Irish landlord."

"Good day, and tell Billy that some of the lads will have a run down to-night to see him."

Next moment Mrs. Hogan sets about preparing dinner for the family. It is not going to be an elaborate affair, but it is going to be a very palatable and wholesome meal. First of all she prepares an exceptionally clean table, on which she places a conically-shaped flour hill of generous dimensions. In the centre of this snow-white edifice she scoops out a symmetrically formed cavity, into which she slowly pours a copious supply of buttermilk from a large jug delicately balanced in her left hand, while with her right she is simultaneously drawing in the obediently disposed flour, so as to make the two unite in the formation of that salutary food called "home-made bread." With all her might she kneads the two together. Mortar, they say, is good in proportion not to the amount of water so much as to the quantity of perspiration

put into it. The same, metaphorically speaking, holds good with regard to "home-made bread," and for that matter, to almost everything else. The flabby gigantic article is now placed in a large circular oven resting on three equi-distant iron feet, of such length as to allow plenty of room and ventilation for the fire beneath. Upon the lid now laid on the oven the half-expiring turf coals are placed. The prisoner is obliged to remain in durance till he has put in the allotted time. Meanwhile, an equally robust substitute is being prepared. With a plunge of the knife through the first cake, a scientific examination of the impression upon it, the skilful housewife bids the liberated prisoner parade the deck, and give a chance for promotion to the next in charge. In less than three hours the second cake has unceremoniously taken the place of his predecessor. Leaving it to take its course, Mrs. Hogan is on her way to call the haymakers in to dinner, and Father Healy arrives to make inquiries about Arthur's health and to learn the particulars of Diamond's sale. It appears he had been speaking with Billy Mallon when the officer passed by. Every one in the district but Tom Hogan himself knew that the huntsmen had their eye on Diamond. And when Colonel Tyson was seen passing it

was concluded the horse would bring a high figure. This was Father Healy's opinion joyfully expressed to Billy. "I'm afraid not" was Billy's answer. "Tom Hogan knows nothing about the hunt. The wife and family were afraid to tell him, and my opinion is that Diamond 'll be sold for a song."

Father Healy took in the situation at a glance, wrote the pencilled note on a piece of paper from his pocket book, and had it sent across the field just in time. Needless to say that the worthy priest is delighted to hear from Tom himself the story of the sale. He kindly inquires about Arthur's health; congratulates Mr. Hogan on the number and appearance of his children, whom he sees going in to dinner, and expresses his regret that none of the sons thought well of going in for the Church. In reply to his hope that it wasn't yet too late, Tom Hogan somewhat sadly answers, "I'm afraid it is."

CHAPTER X.

EASTER SUNDAY.

IT is Easter Sunday, 1876, in an Irish country church. At the eight o'clock Mass there was an unusually large attendance at Holy Communion. Father Tom Feehan officiated, and, having now celebrated the second Mass at eleven o'clock, he turns round to make the parochial announcements, and addresses the congregation. Father Tom is more of a practical than rhetoric preacher. Without text or preface he launches forth:—

“To-day is being celebrated the grandest feast of the Church. During the year we have been celebrating feasts in honour of holy virgins who gave their lives to God's service, of Apostles who carried the knowledge of Christ to distant nations, of martyred confessors, who dyed, for their Redeemer's sake, with their hearts' best blood the battle plains of Christianity. We have been having feasts in honour of the Blessed Virgin and of St. Joseph, the foster-father of our Lord and Saviour. But there is not one of all these feasts so full of gladness as the glorious festival of the Resurrection.

Christmas, with its thousand tender associations, will always make a salutary impression on Christian minds, but the associations connected with Christmas Day are closely allied to sin and sorrow. We are accustomed, indeed, to welcome it in with unbounded gladness, but at the same time we are pained to think that our transgressions it was that brought the Son of God to Bethlehem's stable and that have to bring him yet, through tears and blood, to Calvary's cross. But connected with to-day's celebrations there are no such thoughts as these. There is, or at least there ought to be, nothing but joy to-day in every Christian heart and love reflected from every Christian brow. We should be glad that the thirty-three long years of Christ's sufferings are ended. We should rejoice that He shall never again have to undergo the humiliation of the stable, the blasphemous contradictions of the Scribes and Pharisees, and that awful death upon the cross. The Church on Good Friday was weeping over the death of her Sacred Spouse. Emblems of grief were everywhere apparent. To-day these emblems are laid aside. The plaintive lamentations are no longer heard, the powers of hell are conquered, and the Church herself, at a loss to express her feelings, again and again bursts forth into her uncontrollable

Alleluiahs of delight. She is delighted that Christ has risen from the tomb, that His life-long agony is over, and that the cross, the emblem of salvation, stands forth erect and, at last, triumphant over a regenerated world.

“And now, my brethren, in this universal joy there is only one thing to prevent us to have a share. That one thing is mortal sin—the greatest enemy of the cross of Christ. And why should we be so foolish as to give up the consolations of an upright conscience for the gratifications of our tyrannical passions? But yet, alas! in spite of all, the drunkard will continue to indulge his loathsome appetite and the impure man his forbidden pleasures. In spite of all that Christ has preached and suffered for us there are few hearts in which mortal sin at one time or another has not found a warm reception. But look around and behold the vast majority bent on worldly pleasures, worldly honours, worldly riches. Their lives they spend on the world’s stage, and when, through the weakness of approaching death, they can no longer indulge their passions they will return, they say, to their lifelong insulted Saviour. But think you their Saviour will hear their cry? Think you He will forget in a moment the outrages that they have offered Him, and are you so childish as

to think He will forgive them and give them grace to cry out for mercy under these circumstances? Can such be expected from Him who emphatically said, "If you deny Me before men I will deny you before My Father who is in heaven." Ah, yes, indeed, such as these I fear may call on God, but He will not hear them; they will die in their sins, and He shall but laugh at their destruction.

"But in this dismal picture all, I am glad to say, is not gloomy. Even in our own little church pious souls there are who frequently approach the altar to receive with becoming respect and devotion the adorable Body and Blood of Christ. It was both encouraging and edifying to see the numbers that approached this morning. It is most consoling to those who have on their hands the charge of your souls' salvation to see you arise from the death of sin to the life of grace. And to these souls I would earnestly say: Never return to the grave again; remember, if you allow yourselves to be bound by the chains you have lately broken you may never get from God the grace to burst asunder those chains again. Remember also, that Christ is always witness to all your actions, and although you may have rough storms and treacherous seas to face on your course to

heaven you should always keep your gaze steadfastly fixed on the great reward awaiting you on the eternal shore. And when your difficult voyage is finished, when the hard fight is over, and your earthly struggles terminated, there before you in all His love and kindness shall you see your risen Saviour. And from those lips of His, once parched with the thirst of death, you shall hear but words of gladness; and from those merciful hands, so cruelly lacerated with the rough nails, God Almighty grant that, at the hour of your death, it may be your privilege to receive a garland of joy that shall never fade and a crown of glory that shall shine for ever."

CHAPTER XI.

AS YOU LIKE IT.

FOR the student of history and humanity there are few more pathetically interesting stories than that of Ireland. Her deplorable civil wars, Cromwell's butcheries, her abortive insurrections, her ruined abbeys and the spectral skeletons of her children at the bottom of the wide Atlantic, all unite in casting a funeral-like pall over moor and meadow, hill and mountain, stream and valley. For seven hundred years has she been groaning under the oppressors' yoke, and yet her spirit will not yield. In the pages of James Clarence Mangan you will find her agonies more feelingly expressed than by perhaps any other poet. There are few elegies in the language more exquisitely tender than his lament for the Ulster Earls—

O woman of the piercing wail
Who mournest o'er yon mound of clay
 With sigh and groan,
Would God thou wert among the Gael
Thou would'st not then from day to day
 Weep thus alone.

'Twere long before, around a grave
In green Tirconnell, one could find
 This loneliness ;
Near where Beann Boirche's banners wave
Such grief as thine could ne'er have pined
 Companionless.

Two princes of the line of Conn
Sleep in their cells of clay beside
 O'Donnell Roe :
Three royal youths, alas ! are gone,
Who lived for Erin's weal, but died
 For Ireland's woe.

Ah ! could the men of Ireland read
The names these noteless burial stones
 Display to view,
Their wounded hearts afresh would bleed,
Their tears gush forth again, their groans
 Resound anew !

What do I say ? Ah, woe is me !
Already we bewail in vain
 Their fatal fall !
And Erin, once the great and free,
Now vainly mourns her breakless chain
 And iron thrall !

Then, daughter of O'Donnell, dry
Thine overflowing eyes, and turn
 Thy heart aside,
For Adam's race is born to die,
And sternly the sepulchral urn
 Mocks human pride !

And Thou, O mighty Lord, whose ways
Are far above our feeble minds
To understand,
Sustain us in these doleful days,
And render light the chain that binds
Our fallen land !

Look down upon our dreary state,
And through the ages that may still
Roll sadly on,
Watch Thou o'er hapless Erin's fate,
And shield at least from darker ill
The blood of Conn !

And again—

The high house of O'Neill
Is gone down to the dust,
The O'Brien is clanless and banned ;
And the steel, the red steel,
May no more be the trust
Of the faithful and brave in the land !

O my grief of all griefs
Is to see how thy throne
Is usurped, whilst thyself art in thrall !
Other lands have their chiefs,
Have their kings, thou alone
Art a wife, yet a widow withal !

But no more, this our doom,
While our hearts yet are warm,
Let us not over weakly deplore,
For the hour soon may loom
When the Lord's mighty arm
Shall be raised for our rescue once more !

Whether it is that Arthur Hogan's somewhat melancholy disposition has inclined him towards Mangan's poetry or that the perusal of such a morbidly gloomy writer has made him less joyous at times than his companions we cannot say. Probably there are other elements besides poetry and bad health at work in the formation of his character. His solitary walks about the fields on the lonely Sunday evenings, his pensive rambles around the graves of once familiar faces, and his anxious meditations concerning the everlasting condition of the departed souls, imperceptibly tend to elevate his thoughts towards the supernatural and force him to sigh, in an almost despairing way, for that contentment which he instinctively feels this mortal existence can never give him. Many a time does he kneel beside the grave of his little sister and that of his uncle, Father John, both lying side by side in the family burial ground. About their salvation Arthur has no doubt. The one died before sin had time to defile her, and the other breathed his last in the Diocesan College almost before the holy oil of ordination had dried upon his hands.

Influenced by visits and meditations such as these, Arthur at times seems to live in another world, and his own Tipperary mountains and

rich meadows, of which he is so fond, become absorbed in his ardent contemplations of the pearly gates, the golden streets, the entrancing melodies, and the eternal hills of heaven. Though fond of solitude, he is anything but selfish. Nothing gives him more pleasure than to be able to add to the enjoyment of others. When in company with his brothers and sisters no sacrifice is too great for their welfare. He enters with heart and spirit into all their amusements, and cheerfully lays aside Mangan's mournful elegies for Moore's lovely poems and the patriotically refreshing strains of Thomas Davis. Though Arthur has never learned a note, he has a delicate ear for music, and needs to hear an Irish ballad sung only once to be able to sing it correctly. Returning this Sunday evening from his secluded ramble he finds a jovial crowd of twenty or thirty young people at his father's house. They have been invited by the elder members of the family—with, of course, Tom Hogan's sanction—to a homely entertainment in honour of John Quinlan and his sister Maggie, who have come all the way from the Queen's County to pay a long-promised visit to their aunt, Mrs. Hogan, whom they haven't seen for years. After a hearty dinner the party retire to the barn, as neither the parlour

nor kitchen is spacious enough to afford dancing accommodation for such a large number. The boys lose very little time in selecting their partners. Comfortably seated on forms, arranged along the walls, several couples complacently carry on their harmless flirtations. Others saunter up and down in pairs, whispering their ephemeral cogitations to each other, not forgetting to cast an impatient look now and again towards the fiddler and flute-player. These two important personages, upon whom so much depends, are not going to risk their reputations before they have satisfied themselves that their instruments are in perfect unison. The simultaneously uttered "all right" by the musicians clears the forms, and in the twinkling of an eye puts many an anxious pair of lively feet upon the floor. Oh, what rattling music ! What manly fellows, and, above all, what coy and charming colleens ! Ah, yes,

But meet him in his cabin rude,
Or dancing with his dark-haired Mary,
You'd swear they knew no other mood
Than mirth and love in Tipperary.

There is no dance-music so lively or exhilarating as the Irish, and, most probably, no people in the world that dance get less detriment to their moral character than the Irish peasantry.

Enter any ballroom, and no matter how dignifiedly the company may be careering through their saltatory revolutions, the moment the notes of the Irish quadrilles are heard, pleasantry, frolic, and gaiety take possession of head and heart and feet. They are all captive to the irresistible spell. Even sensibly sedate Tom Hogan enjoys the treat. For two or three hours the dance continues. The young people are supremely happy. Doubles and jigs have been danced beyond counting. The four-handed reel, however, by Jack Hogan and his cousin, John Quinlan, and their two sisters, has been the dance of the evening. Now it is one pair in the ascendant, again the other. And when the four, after having negotiated the all but interminable intricacies without a hitch, conclude the figure they are greeted with outbursts of applause from all directions. Light refreshments are now carried round by Mary Hogan and her mother. Several young girls are anxious to give Mary assistance, but it would never do to deprive the genial Mrs. Hogan of the opportunity and pleasure of treating the visitors to the appetising cakes made by her own two hands and of asking the boys and girls if the tea were to their taste or if they would like a little more milk or sugar. The two musicians have been escorted to the

parlour for, I suspect, something stronger and more palatable than a glass of water or ginger ale. With an air of co-ordinate importance they return to the barn. And no wonder, for to be the privileged recipient of such treatment from Tom Hogan is, I may be allowed to inform you, my dear reader, no insignificant distinction in these parts. After the refreshments have disappeared an impromptu concert takes possession. The melody of the notes is not exactly such as one would expect to draw as big a house as a concert given by a Catherine Hayes, for example, or an Adelina Patti. All the same, Patsy Doolan's rendering of "The Valley of Sliev-na-mon" and "Patrick Sheehan" brought down the house. Loud cries were now heard requesting a song from Arthur Hogan. During the evening his attention has been wholly taken up between listening to the music and watching the dancers. On hearing his name he becomes flushed and nervous. His first impulse is to clear, but being coaxed by his cousin, Maggie Quinlan, who sits beside him, he commences in a clear, sweet, though uncultivated, voice with "The Mess Tent is Full and the Glasses are Set." Throwing himself with great spirit into his work, he sends the notes about in such a manner that his mother is beginning to think that the asthma must have gone altogether, or that there was nothing ever

the matter with the "pipes" at all. Being excitedly encored, Arthur surprises them all by his spirited singing of "O'Donnell Aboo." With the invigorating notes of that martial and deservedly popular song tingling in their ears, the cheerful gathering separate; and, though their thoughts during the last five or six hours have been entirely given up to social enjoyment, it is, I think, safe to prophesy that not one of that happy group will retire to-night to rest without having taken part in the devout recital of "The Rosary."

And just here I would be strongly inclined to moralise only I find that my ideas on this particular point were stolen by Oliver Goldsmith nearly a hundred years before I was born.

Yes, let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
Those simple blessings of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm than all the gloss of art.
Spontaneous joys where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway.
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined,
But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth arrayed—
In these ere trifles half their wish obtain
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain.
And e'en while fashions brightest arts decoy,
The heart, distrusting, asks if this be joy.

CHAPTER XII.

FATHER HEALY'S FAREWELL AND ARTHUR'S LAST DAY AT SCHOOL.

A FEW days after Father Healy's visit to Tom Hogan's a letter arrives from head-quarters conveying to him a change from Ballymore to Brittas.

The following day he pays his last visit to the school in which, during his residence in the parish, he has spent many a happy and useful hour. Up to this he has kept the secret to himself and his brother priests, but as soon as he gazes on the cheerful countenances of the little children he feels his heart throb with affection for them, and it is in vain that he attempts to shake off his nervousness. To divert his thoughts he carelessly turns aside towards a large map on the wall, and is evidently occupied in searching for some non-existent belligerent Republic in South America or for some undiscovered island in the broad Pacific. Failing deplorably in his exploring expedition, he goes at once to practical business.

“ I very much regret, my affectionate children, that I must soon leave you. The Archbishop has changed me to another parish, and as you are of all my parishioners the ones of whom I am the fondest, I have deemed it my duty to come to you at the very earliest moment and bid you each and all a fond, though sad, farewell. I was always delighted to come here, and although I have been very strict, and sometimes even severe, especially with regard to your prayers and the catechism, you will never understand the fatherly love I have always had, and now more than ever have, for you. I love you because of the hard work you have always so cheerfully done for me. I thank you for the devotional way you assist at Mass and receive the sacraments, and I love you also through the hope I have that, though separated from you, we may yet live in one another's company—you in mine, and I in yours—in heaven hereafter for all eternity. But, my affectionate little friends, in order to get into paradise and reign with Christ and His blessed mother, with the apostles, and the angels and saints, and our own friends that will be there, we must lead honest, industrious, holy lives. We must love and respect our parents. We must obey them and all those that in God's providence may be placed over us. We

must shun bad company as we would a poisonous serpent. We must study our catechism attentively, often read Catholic books, such as the 'Imitation of Christ,' 'St. Liguori on the Commandments,' and that sweet, lovely little book, so suitable for Irish children, 'The Dove of the Tabernacle.' But, above all things, we must say our morning and night prayers devoutly, attend Sunday Mass regularly, and frequently go to Confession and Holy Communion. Before you grow up to be big men and young women I'm afraid that my corpse will be laid to rest in its lonely grave. Something seems to be constantly hinting to me that I shall die soon. But whether that be the case or not, let me earnestly beseech you not to forget me. Softly pray for me whenever you hear my name mentioned. Pray for me as often as you think of the religious instructions I have given you; pray for me when you hear the chapel bell calling the congregation to Mass on Sundays; and, in return, you may rest assured that cold in death shall be my heart and lips before you by me will be on earth forgotten. And in all this I must confess that I am selfish. For I somehow imagine that I would feel doubly happy if I were to have the blessed privilege of having you all round me in the happy halls of heaven. And

now, once more, and most probably for the last time, let me bid you all a heartfelt farewell, and may God be with you."

After he has, in a most paternal manner, shaken hands with Mary Shanahan, the ever genial and unselfish school-mistress, and given her words of encouragement and praise, Father Healy, accompanied by the master, leaves the school. The children are sad as orphans. No father could be kinder to them or more solicitous about their welfare. Besides, how can the poor, shivering serfs face the future or forget how frequently by the priest's appearance were prevented and curbed the scholastic cyclones?

This time it is not Jack Hogan, but his brother, Arthur, that has been commissioned to take charge of Father Healy's horse, which happens, however, to be a mare, whose name is Fanny.

"How is the lad getting on with his studies?"

"Exceptionally well for his time at school. Eighty-two is the highest number of days he has ever been any year at school. He has always been very delicate, and will never be of much use on a farm. Light work such as a shop or in a public-house would suit him better."

"A public-house! A public hell! The loathsome cancer that so viciously, and apparently so incurably, preys on the physical, moral and

intellectual nature of the Irish race. Take away your public-houses, and in fifty years there would be little need for lunatic asylums, and still less for jails, from Cork to Antrim. In his native land, among his own people, the drunken Irishman is, God knows, bad enough; but to see him in the lowest depths of infamy and disgrace you have to get a glimpse of him as he wobbles about as the pitiable object of hostile treatment and sarcastically bitter remarks in the stranger's land. To foreign countries a number of our good-natured people seem to carry their intemperate habits, inseparably united with the marrow of their bones. Poor, helpless creatures! they are amongst the lowest of the low, as their temperate brothers are amongst the most intelligent, respectable, and trustworthy citizens of America and the British Colonies. But for this national vice no race, in proportion to their opportunities and numbers, would be in more prominent positions in the United States and Australia than the Irish and their descendants. Oh! for another Father Mathew to come to the rescue of the Irish people!"

"Any chance of his going on for the Church?" queried Father Healy.

"I don't think so," profoundly replies the master.

“Even so, I must see his father before I leave. Who knows but Arthur may be a priest yet.”

Tom Hogan is by no means very sanguine upon the point.

“Now, Father Healy, for goodness sake don't ask me to mention such a delicate matter to him. Should he go on I'll willingly pay expenses. But my opinion is that he has never given the subject one moment's consideration. When I was his age I used occasionally think I had a vocation; now I believe I never had. Isn't it less dangerous for a young man to be guilty of almost any crime than become a priest feeling he has no Divine call, or to even present himself for Holy Orders with a doubtful conscience? His life would be a perplexity, if not a scandal. Before my God, I would prefer seeing all my children laid in their graves rather than have the character of the Church tarnished by any member of my family. Besides, Arthur would never be strong or hardy enough for the severe duties of the priesthood. From his birth he has never had a day's good health. If you had spoken to me about his two younger brothers I would allow myself to think that there might be something in it. But, Arthur! Why, only for his cheerful manner, and good heart, and

hopeful disposition, I believe he never would have survived the winter."

"Well now, Tom," replies Father Healy, "as this will be our last familiar chat for a long time together, and as you have had your say upon the matter, and what I consider a very important business, I must have mine. In the first place, I am pleased with the manly way you have given out your mind, and I can understand your reluctance to mention the subject to him. At the same time, though the priestly office is both difficult and dangerous, isn't it necessary, according to God's law, as laid down in the New Testament, that, for the salvation of the people, there must be found men courageous enough to encounter the dangers and, with God's grace, overcome the difficulties. If Arthur has been called to be a priest his corporal weakness can be easily remedied and his life-long indispositions cured. Whilst quietly thinking over the matter a few nights ago I carelessly opened the New Testament, and the first words that met my gaze were—'But the foolish things of this world hath God chosen, that He may confound the wise; and the weak things of this world hath God chosen, that He may confound the strong; and the base things of this world and the things that are contemptible hath God chosen, and the

things that are not, that He might bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his sight.' I read no further. I closed the sacred volume, and definitely concluded that your son Arthur has been called to be a priest."

Tom Hogan and his worthy wife are still sceptical. Wasn't it by the Masses said for him by Father Healy and his mother's devout prayers, and her severe fastings for five successive Fridays on one meal of bread and water, that Arthur got cured of what more than one doctor pronounced an incurable ailment? Besides, with the suffocating asthma and bronchial trouble, of what use could he ever be for hard work or preaching? Qualified by these considerations, Mrs. Hogan is anything but enthusiastic about making the experiment. Poor woman; she fears that Arthur's case would never be more than a repetition of her own brother's. Time wasted; money spent; to have him die before ordination, or be ordained just in time for death to come and claim him. This, however, was not the way her own parents reasoned when they allowed their only son to study to be a priest, and almost made themselves paupers to gratify their child's desire to consecrate his life to God's service. This thought decides Mrs. Hogan. Her strong faith comes to her assistance, and on

bended knees she earnestly prays that in Arthur's regard not *her* will but *God's* may be accomplished. Arthur continues at school for a week or two longer. Owing to being absent for a few days previously he is relegated to the last position. This is anything but an unbearable penance, for it places him, for the time being, next to what has been ever regarded as the most intelligent and, in every respect, the best girl that ever entered the school. Katie Gleeson apparently seems quite at home too. As the boys, one after another, fail to answer some grammatical puzzle, and as the chance of getting to the top of the class approaches nearer and nearer to Arthur, in commendable obedience to a captivatingly whispered "don't answer," the young gallant chivalrously sacrifices his promotion on the altar of self-denial, and courteously takes the consequences. The question is answered by the fair Miranda. Ferdinand remains in *statu quo*. This is Arthur's last day in the local academy; and Katie Gleeson, notwithstanding an occasional feeling of self-reproach, goes home from school with a more Elysian gladness of soul than ever enriched the heart of a Grecian goddess or an English queen.

CHAPTER XIII.

“DAN, avic, machree, where in the name of Apollo and the nine muses, and the three fates, and the entire family of the Cyclops, have you been spending your time all the morning? For the past two hours, with the exception of one hundred and nineteen minutes and some few paltry seconds, I have been running the risk of permanently injuring my throat and musical voice with calling out for your indispensable presence. For once in your life, Dan, you must put your best foot foremost. As Bonaparte remarked to Julius Cæsar at Bunker Hill, Cromwell expects every man to-day in Ballymore to do his duty. Ah, Dan, there you are! The moment I make the slightest mistake—historical or classical mistake—down unmercifully do you swoop upon me like Byron’s Assyrian wolf on the helpless fold or Patsy Doolan’s greyhound on a domain rabbit. Your greatest fault is that you are too affectionately addicted to the ancient classics. Demosthenes and Cicero, Homer and Virgil, Æschylus and Horace are, I admit, viands fit for kingly intellects. But in

this clayey body of ours, Dan, there are organs in operation besides the brain. I am the heart and spinal column in this parish. If on no higher grounds than that of general director and universal provider I have, I think, a perfect right to regard myself as the worthy, as well as very important, head of our ecclesiastical domicile. Now, Dan, to business. Father Healy leaves here next Saturday. Our sapient, eagle-eyed Archbishop is taking him to his own cathedral parish. No matter how much we may regret Father Healy's departure, every soul must be subject to the higher powers, so that it isn't for inferiors like you or me to find fault with the arrangements or disobey the commands of those in authority. Here are thirteen epistles, written by my facile pen since Mass this morning. I require you to deliver them as soon as possible to their respective proprietors. They are addressed to the leading Catholics in the district, all of whom I am anxious to have with us on Thursday evening to cordially drink the health of our dear friend before he leaves. Harness Bessie at once, and be off. Call first at Tom Hogan's. Tell him from me that the meeting of the clans will be incomplete without him. Take Arthur with you ; you'll find him excellent company ; he'll help to balance the side car ;

the drive will be an ambrosial refreshment for his delicate chest, and should there be any gates to be opened during your diurnal peregrinations you will find him most obedient to your directions and as light-legged as a lamp-lighter. The Hogans and Flynns are all orthodox. How could they be *aliunde*, Dan, seeing that they are consanguineously connected with your humble servant ? ”

With a jovial heart Dan is away on his important mission. Father Tom retires to his study. Would you care, dear reader, to obtain a glimpse of him in his cosy library ? Perhaps you would. Well, then, Father Tom Feehan is, even for a Tipperary man, of an exceptionally stalwart build. He has an iron constitution. He is much over six feet high, and solidly knit together. His step is firm and elastic, and though his features, especially to a stranger, may seem ascetic, a man of observation with half an eye cannot help seeing the genial goodness of the big, cosmopolitan heart breaking out through the generous, though piercing, glance of the large grey eyes. Scarcely has he closed the door than he throws himself gently into his broad armchair and gives his mind up to the quiet contemplation of things in general, and to his affectionate brother's approaching exodus in

particular. A few moments later is he immersed in the divine office. From the day he left Maynooth he has always paid the Pope's debt before dinner. See him there with his costly and beautiful Mount Melleray beads lovingly twined round his left wrist and his expensively bound breviary devotionally elevated before his eyes with both hands. Little do his poor, faithful parishioners dream that in their midst is one whose supplications are ascending like fragrant incense on their behalf before the great white heavenly throne, and the one who, though still in the flesh is, for the time being, absolutely heedless of all ephemeral vicissitudes, while on fancy's wings he finds himself carried through the golden regions of prayer and meditation into the very midst of the heavenly choirs. Unknown to all is he consummately enjoying such a feast as the slaves of Venus or Bacchus never tasted. Neither rank, nor fame, nor worldly praise has he ever sought for. Like Goldsmith's parson, he is much more ambitious to raise the lowly than to rise himself. In college, though seldom among the giant intellects of his respective classes, he was never much behind the constellations of the first magnitude. With professors and students Tom Feehan was one of the most popular men that ever passed through

the venerable halls of his renowned Alma Mater. But it is not of his academical, but of his missionary, career we are now treating. Oh ! how his big heart swells with intense fervour, as with ever-increasing emphasis he devoutly enunciates every syllable—*Deus meus es tu et confitebor tibi. Deus meus es tu, et exaltabo te.* And why not ? To what other class has God been so good as He has been towards priests ? From among millions has He generously elected them. He has made them His chosen sentinels on the watch towers of Israel. Kings and princes does He compel to bend the knee with contrite hearts before His anointed if they would have their crimes pardoned. And all this, remember, not for the gratification, glorification or vanity of any particular individual, be that individual simple priest or supreme Pontiff, but for the sake of the souls redeemed by Christ's awful agony and death upon the cross. The confessor, who absolves others, has to be in turn absolved himself. Like sheep in the trackless wilderness we have all gone astray. Even so we should not despair. The Shepherd has not as yet given us up as lost. Gladly, if we but give Him the opportunity, will He bring us back to the fold. Tenderly will He attend to our many wants. Charitably will He re-invigorate our spiritual

skeletons, make the refreshing current of divine grace circulate through the withered veins, and mercifully give us a fresh start on the straight path that leads to life eternal. And yet they tell us there is no God. God, declares the pantheist, is everything, and everything is God. Behind the veil, behind the veil, cries out the agnostic. While the enlightened atheist would give us to understand that, in the prehistoric times of nebulous existence, two or three insignificant nothings ingeniously conspired to produce a procreative something to which they, to their supreme satisfaction, trace our present transcendental greatness. In the face of such enlightenment how childish appears the Gospel of Christ and His humble disciples.

CHAPTER XIV.

FATHER HEALY'S SEND-OFF.

THERE they are. Dr. O'Donnell takes the chair. A moment later the vice-chair is capaciously filled by Father Tom. Father Healy is seated on the right and Tom Hogan on the left of the chairman. The intermediate positions are somewhat nervously filled by the agricultural visitors. It is a unique assemblage, for in Ireland very rarely is there any flourish of trumpets in connection with the exit or the advent of a curate. With all his fiery temperament Celtic Pat is very conservative. He is a bigoted stickler for old customs. John Bull thaws occasionally. Diplomatically-constituted Sandy can always tell you, especially in the winter, from what quarter the wind is blowing, and shifts his sails accordingly. Old-fashioned Pat sticks to principles. He invariably keeps his eye on the next world. He and his virtuous womankind have nailed their allegiance not to any extemporaneously-erected arch in honour of any ephemeral king or duke, but they have determinedly riveted their colours

to the imperishable tree of Calvary. By that life-giving tree have they for ages been self-sacrificingly standing. By it, thank God, they stand to-day, and, with Heaven's help, beneath its protecting arms will the Irish race be found faithful to the end of time.

With a little assistance, *sinistra deztraque*, the venerable Nestor is upon his feet.

“Rev. Fathers and representative parishioners, I am glad that I am strong enough to be with you to-night to propose and drink to Father Healy's health. For the last four or five years he and Father Feehan and myself have lived most happily together. We have cordially dined at the same table. We have done our best to make life as comfortable as possible for one another, and have frequently said our prayers in common. I, with practically one foot in the grave, shall feel very lonely after Father Healy. Rarely have I lived with such an excellent priest, and never with one more exemplary or kindly-hearted. With no further preface let us toast his health, and ardently wish him length of years, with ever-increasing success, in his priestly office.” (Applause.)

“Very Rev. Chairman, Father Feehan, and very dear people, you all know I am no orator. If I can only do what God expects of me by

way of saving the souls entrusted to my charge I will have succeeded, I hope, in the fulfilment of the end He had in view in my creation. Apart from His divine will, I have no will of my own. Cheerfully will I do my best to be in all things obedient to my Archbishop. Never have I been so happy as I have been in this parish. With unfeigned sorrow am I leaving two priests who have been more than brothers to me, and, with tears I cannot keep back, I bid farewell to a congregation for whose temporal and spiritual welfare I will ever pray. I am most grateful for your unbounded generosity towards me. I once read, I cannot tell you where, that 'on the plains of Tipperary the stranger is like a king.' Truer words were never written. I was born in another county—Limerick. This has been, I think, though probably unconsciously to yourselves, the reason why, to some extent at least, you have been always inclined to exaggerate the value of my labours in your behalf. I am not fit for a big cathedral. No man more convinced of that than I am. I have never asked or wished for a change from here. With fear and trembling I think of the difficult future; but, and with all my soul I say it, God's will and not mine be done." (Continued applause, sincere and heartfelt.)

Says Father Tom:—"After the two eloquent orations you have just listened to I'm afraid my croaking voice will be more discordant than the proverbial cymbals or the hysterical notes of a Salvation Army anthem out of tune. All the same, I must have my say. Our two clerical friends have been showering sacerdotal compliments as thick as snow-flakes or notice to quit writs about the room all the evening. But what, let me ask them, would we priests be without the inflexible support of a loyal people at our back? What or where would we be if, like the French clergy, we were obliged to obsequiously present to some impudently officious cuff and collar government clerk our mercenary bill for our usual despicable quarterly stipend? God grant that such a system may never become current coin in this country. God grant that the priests of the present and the future may be worthy successors of those unselfish clergymen who, in the days of the gently-tempered Elizabeth, in holy Oliver Cromwell's time, and in the proselytising soup-kitchen times and famine periods, stood like grim death the ever sympathetically faithful friends of their inhumanly persecuted congregations! In utter disregard of Satan's satellites they celebrated Mass whenever and wherever they could for their scattered

people ; sorrowed with them in their bitter tribulations, and lovingly administered in the plague-infested cabin and by the shivering roadside the last sacraments to their expiring kith and kin. Throughout the world wide there are no Catholic people like our own. And, though it may be imprudent for me to give expression to the thought, this is my conviction—the Irish people can be depended on to despise eviction, famine, fire and sword, and even death itself, for the sake of Christ crucified, and out of love for the faith St. Patrick brought them, as long as, and no longer than, they have, as leaders, priests of a self-sacrificing disposition, and ready, if necessary, to die for and together with them. (Great applause.) Brother priests, ‘The laity.’”

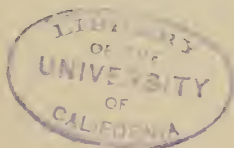
With evident trepidation Tom Hogan faces the ordeal—

“Very Rev. Fathers and Brother Farmers,—Being unaccustomed to public speaking I am like a fish out of water, and regret that somebody else hasn’t been selected to respond to the toast so eloquently proposed by Father Feehan. We are all grateful for the kind way he has spoken about us and for the high opinion he has of the religious characteristics of the Irish people. It is true, I think, that we are always anxious to see our clergy decently sup-

ported, and give, with perhaps some exceptions here and there, as a duty of strict obligation, whatever we can conveniently afford. For doing this we neither deserve, nor indeed do we expect, special praise or compliments. In place of the priests being in our debt it is, in my opinion, the other way about. I'm afraid we often get much more credit than we deserve. Armies, however brave, under incapable commanders rarely win big battles. If our forefathers in the days of persecution had as their guides and leaders selfish or luxurious pastors, our own faith might be to-day as materialistic as it is in England or as slavish to heretical tyrants as it is in France at the present moment. With the help of God and the intercession of St. Patrick and our own exertions we have no fear that the strong bond of deep affection that has ever existed in Ireland between the priests and people can be ever broken. Irish laymen have not forgotten the O'Hurleys, the Plunketts, the Murphys, and the Sheehys of the past. Our priests of the present are composed of similar metal. For their unswerving fidelity we have no anxiety. But we must be all upon our guard—both priests and people—never by our dissensions to criminally sacrifice or endanger either our faith or national aspirations to the

vulgar gratifications of our egotistical ambitions.
(Cheers.)

“In conclusion, very Rev. Fathers, I beg to thank you for having invited us to this important and very agreeable function, and for having given us the opportunity of bidding a fond good-bye to our noble-minded and generous-hearted Father Healy.” (Applause.)



CHAPTER XV.

A PAIR OF FARMERS.

“ THAT’S all right, Shaun ; but where among the farmers, or for that matter even among the *Genthry*, could you pick up another man as intelligent as Tom Hogan ? Tom Hogan is a man in a thousand ; Tom Hogan is one in ten thousand ; Tom Hogan is one man in a million. He is, not to put too fine a point upon it, unique. Tom Hogan is, my dear hero, I assure you, none of your small potatoes. I am game to bet you, Shaun Daly, anything you like, from a two-shilling piece to a brass button, that Tom Hogan, while we’re cackling here like a flock of wild geese, is with his wife and children around him on their knees on the very outskirts of the third or fourth decade.”

“ I’m afraid, Tim, you had quite enough from the priests without paying such a copious salutation at Betty Buckley’s on our way home to Mr. Jameson. At the rate your tongue’s clattering at present, if you only had your heads

you'd overtake Tom Hogan in spite of the big start he had of you."

"Of course I would—and of course I wouldn't. But, as the poet has it: 'Tis but one night of our life; and 'tisn't every day poor unfortunate clod-hoppers have the chance of getting such treatment free, gratis, and for nothing."

"Tim, 'tis getting late; good night."

"Late, how are you? Have you bought the seed potatoes yet?"

"No. Have you?"

"I have; six bags at eighteen pence a stone."

"Red Americans?"

"No."

"Early Rose?"

"No."

"Scotch Champions?"

"No. Guess again."

"Wisha, the devil a guess. Can't you tell us at once and give up your conundrums. Sure any idote (idiot) of a fellow could make an ass of himself at that game. Can you tell me, with all your knowledge, why is love like a new potato? Of course you can't. Because, Tim, my jewel, it first breaks out at the eyes. Give us a bar of 'The Days are Gone,' and after that we'll clear home."

After a few good coughs to clear the throat

and a shrug or two of the shoulders, Tim Dwyer, ably seconded by Shaun Daly, strikes out:—

Oh, the days are gone, when beauty bright
 My heart's chain wove;
 When my dream of life, from morn till night,
 Was love, still love.
 New hopes may bloom,
 And joys may come,
 Of milder, calmer beam,
 But there's nothing half so sweet in life
 As love's young dream—
 Oh, there's nothing half so sweet in life
 As love's young dream.

.
 Oh, that hallowed form is ne'er forgot
 Which first love traced;
 Still it lingering haunts the greenest spot
 On memory's waste.
 T'was odour fled
 As soon as shed;
 'Twas mornings winged dream;
 'Twas a light that ne'er can shine again
 On life's dull stream—
 Oh, 'twas a light that ne'er shall shine again
 On life's dull stream.

“And now, Shaun, do you know what I was thinking of while we were singing that grand old melody. I was thinking of the time when you and I were youngsters; when there were three houses in the district for every one that there is to-day; when the chapels used to be

crowded, and when the boys and girls used to meet and have their innocent little dances at the cross-roads. God be with those bright and happy days, and God be with the poor Irish exiles throughout the world. Every day the emigrant ships are bearing away the bone and sinew of Ireland to other lands. With all their zeal and wisdom our priests are making a great mistake. They should do something to make life tolerable for the young people. They shouldn't be so severe in putting a stop to harmless recreations, and they should come forth as one man to check the ravages of landlordism, and keep their people at home. Every Sunday from the altar are they crying out 'patience, patience! Never allow your immortal souls to be defiled by the blood of murder.' That's all right for men who have no rent to pay, no family to support, and no eviction notices to disturb their quiet rest and their happy dreams. Of what earthly use is life to a man whose house may be unroofed at any moment, and whose wife and little ones may be driven to live on charity or die of hunger. Ireland never will, and never ought to be, contented until Irish landlordism, with all its attendant evils—its agents, bailiffs, process servers—is dead and damned, and buried at the wrong side of the

church. England slew a king, and justly, because he dared to rob his subjects. The Irish landlords are living debauched lives in foreign capitals at the expense of the plundered Irish farmer, and the Irish Church is silent."

"Tim Dwyer!"

"Yes."

"You're too previous."

"Perhaps I am."

"With all your eloquence, Tim, will you answer me one simple question?"

"If I can."

"You were born too early or too late—which?"

"I can't tell you."

"Well, Tim, I don't like to see you get too excited, and as you were good enough to sing for me I'll give you my favourite from one of the National school books."

"Go ahead."

This world is all a fleeting show,
For man's illusion given;
The smiles of joy, the tears of woe,
Deceitful shine, deceitful flow,
There's nothing true but heaven.
And false the light on glory's plume,
As fading hues of even,
And love and hope and beauty's bloom
Are blossoms gathered for the tomb—
There's nothing bright but heaven.

Poor wand'ers of a stormy day,
From wave to wave we're driven,
And fancy's flash and reason's ray
Serve but to light the troubled way—
There's nothing calm but heaven.

“Shaun, is the missus ever angry with you?”

“Never, except when I stop out late without any reason.”

“What kind of a temper is she on these occasions?”

“A regular tartar.”

“You're a lucky man, Shaun.”

“How so?”

“Well, whenever I stop out late I have to face a *crame o'tarthur*.”

“But, Tim, you never told me the name of the new seed potatoes.”

“No; because you didn't give me time. Well, to tell you the truth, I'm afraid these mountaineers are too sharp for us lowlanders.

At the top of his voice, with a strong Yankee drawl, this Borrisoleigh fellow vociferates—
“To all whom it may concern, or, to be more simple, be it known to all and sundry that I have for sale the best seed potatoes in this Brittas market to-day, barring none. In comparison with them your watery, pink-eyed buds, your American failures, and your antiquated Scotch

Champions are simply not in the running. Not only are my Murphies first-class table edibles, but they likewise possess the prettiest cognomen—in other words, the purtiest name of any potato that ever vegetated upon the prolific superficies of this orb or any other mundane planet. The purchaser may call them what he likes, but I have christened them: ‘Sow-em-when-you-like and dig-em-when-you-want-em.’ ”

“I wonder,” says Shaun, as he starts for home, “that the fellow didn’t call them: ‘Sow-em-before-you-buy-em and eat-em-before-you-dig-em.’ ”

CHAPTER XVI.

THERE is a knock at Father Tom's door, and in response to a distinctly articulated "come in," Father Healy, with a letter from the Archbishop, says, in a nervous tone, "Read this."

"Ha, ha ! I thought as much. So the young recruit cannot be here till next Tuesday, and you have to remain for the Sunday duty. Now to be plain and honest with you, is that any reason why you should have been so suddenly transmogrified into an aspen leaf ? If, before I spoke last night, I had known you were such an unmitigated hypocrite I would have painted you before the farmers in your true colour. Evidently, Dr. O'Donnell and myself have been for years skilfully blinded by a clerical renegade. Twenty-four hours haven't yet elapsed since you perfidiously simulated how affectionately you revered us all. And now, because you are obliged to spend two or three days more with us there is no limit to your disappointment. Better exchange at once the soutane for the red coat, and make at once for Templemore or the Curragh for the Queen's shilling.

The Church has outlived the desertion of greater men."

"Father Tom, for goodness sake don't be making me more miserable. I have come for advice. I'm almost certain to break down when I face the people on Sunday, and having bade them farewell last night, through their representatives, neither my feelings nor nerves are sufficiently strong to face the trying ordeal a second time. I am sure to fail."

"Fail, indeed. But screw your courage to the sticking place and you'll not fail. The priest that loves his people and honestly gives expression to his actual feelings never fails. It is only, or at least, principally to such preachers that the inspired *dabitur vobis* is richly given. Studied rhetoric and finished periods have too much of the first person singular "I am" about them to do much lasting good. Although not deeply educated, our congregations are very shrewd, and few among them but are intelligent enough to distinguish between the counterfeit and the ding-dong metal; besides, you know much better than I can tell you that you hold their heart's affection in the hollow of your hands, and possess the power of turning or twisting them any way you like. Next Sunday if you only say 'My dear people, in my very heart

I love you,' you'll have succeeded in putting the parish to the expense of carting away the debris of the altar rails, and to the additional cost and trouble of erecting a more up-to-date Communion railing in their place. Ah, my dear fellow, if I only had your strong faith and intense devotion and zeal I'd think nothing of shifting, at a moment's notice, the Devil's Bit to the Bog of Allen. No man ever came for advice to me but received the best in my power to give. Next Monday will be All Souls' Day. Give the poor patient prisoners a good lift by preaching after the same style and manner as you would wish another priest to preach for you if you're own suffering soul were one among them. With that advice, clear—study the subject carefully, prepare the points, have your ideas in order, and I'll unselfishly go security for your success."

Father Healy takes the advice, and goes to prepare himself for the trying ordeal. He pays little or no attention to the dogmatic side of the question, for he is well aware that every one of his parishioners as firmly believes in the doctrine as he does himself.

Without text or preface of any kind he strikes out boldly—"The Catholic Church, like a prudently affectionate mother, is ever anxious

to secure the everlasting happiness of the immortal souls entrusted to her charge. Scarcely have their eyes been opened to the light of day than this maternal affection is, in a thousand ways, displayed by her towards them. In the regenerating waters of baptism the stain of Adam's guilt is washed away. By the absolution imparted in the sacred tribunal the actual sins of her grown-up children by a good confession are remitted, and the adorable body and precious blood of her Divine Spouse and Founder, through the ministry of her priests, does she daily give, the spiritual health of the weak to strengthen, of the strong to increase, and of all to fortify and maintain. And when the final, bitter struggle comes ; when the strong voice is fast failing ; when the eyes, once so bright, are growing dim with agony ; when the helpless hands are lying motionless ; when the feet have lost their use, and the ear has become dead to all earthly sounds, and the poor heart itself is fit to break, then is it, when the fond child of her bosom is about to realise the dreadful mysteries of eternity, that the most affectionate chord in that faithful mother's heart is touched ; then is it that her priests are obliged to go at any cost and at any hour to administer the last sacraments and impart the final benediction to

the departing spirit. With the eye of faith you may see the priest, with stole round his neck, his hand gently placed on the aching brow, his heart filled with sympathy, his voice broken with emotion as the salutary accents of the last absolution are pronounced; and as he raises aloft the Holy Viaticum, how frequently are not his eyes dimmed with tears, tears of unfeigned gratitude to his Great Creator for the sublime, though delicate, dignity conferred upon him, and tears of supernatural gladness that his is the privilege and consolation of being able to give with his own hand the adorable Eucharist to an expiring sister or brother.

“ But it is not alone during life that this maternal and highly commendable solicitude is displayed by the church towards her countless children. When the last sad rites of the funeral ceremony come to be performed, in the person of her priests does she take her stand beside their graves, and above their clay her *Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine* does she frequently repeat for the eternal peace of the departed soul. And when your most intimate friends will have ceased to grieve; when, with the unsympathetic clay that hides away your coffin, their sorrow may be buried; when the rank grass may be growing wild above your grave; when your last

earthly resting-place may be unknown, and your very name be among men unremembered, your memory will be as fresh in the affectionate recollection of the church as it was that distant date when your unknown and long-forgotten grave was first made. In every Mass celebrated throughout the world does the church devoutly pray that God would mercifully grant a place of refreshment, light and peace to the suffering souls. Continuously is she appealing to us to be mindful of the urgent needs of our departed brethren. With innumerable indulgences has she enriched the devout exercises of the faithful for this very charitable and most highly commendable devotion. And, as if all this were not enough to satisfy her maternal wishes, one month of each year does she particularly set aside for this object. Scarcely have the jubilant strains with which the festival of All Saints is celebrated died away than the church turns her attention from that countless multitude in heaven to that vast crowd anxiously awaiting the long-wished for moment of their liberation. The contemplation of that immense army in heaven constantly keeps before the church's mind the important truth that other children of hers there are who have not, as yet, reached their eternal destination, and for whom she

must prostrate herself in humble supplication, that the agonies of their imprisonment may be speedily mitigated and the happy annunciation of their resurrection be at hand. Therefore it is that on All Souls' Day the rich ornaments of the church are laid aside, the altars bereft of their festive coverings, and the church in her mournful vesture of black touchingly reminds her children that it is their duty to turn aside awhile from the corrupting pleasures of a sinful world to fervently breathe efficacious prayers to God for the souls in purgatory.

“ You all understand the church's teaching on this subject. It is of Catholic faith that there is in existence such a place, and that souls therein detained can be relieved by our prayers, acts of mortification, and in a most particular manner by the most holy sacrifice. How long any individual soul may have to remain in that prison no man can tell. One thing, however, on this point is certain, that as nothing defiled can ever enter heaven, the soul will have to stay in purgatory till every, even the smallest, stain by full atonement is washed away. Two classes go to purgatory—all who die in venial sin and all who depart this life before they have done penance enough to satisfy for the temporal punishment still due to God's offended justice

for their mortal sins already pardoned in the sacrament of Penance. Now, of all those who fortunately die in God's friendship we may take it for granted that only very few are perfectly fit to enter heaven the moment they expire. What countless numbers of souls therefore must there not be continuously in that cleansing fire ; and, because they are unable to help themselves, what a charitably beneficent act on our part to generously come to their assistance. In the words of Job, do they seem to constantly cry out to us—‘ My friends, at least—oh ! you, my friends—have pity on me, for the hand of the Lord is heavy on me.’

“ And who are they who request our prayers ? It may be that patient father who had perhaps to incessantly toil to make us comfortable. It may be that affectionate mother, who, to save our worthless life, would not for one moment hesitate to sacrifice her own. It may be a brother or sister who so often, by their cheerful society and unselfish affection, contributed so much to increase our joys and soothe our sorrows. Or, in fine, it may be some companion of whose sin we had been the occasion. For all these, therefore, and after them for all, without exception, confined in purgatory, let all our prayers, all our charities, all our penances, all

our mortifications, all our Masses during this month of November, be offered up with contrite hearts to God in heaven. Conduct so charitably disinterested cannot fail to bring down God's blessings on our lives on earth, and when our eyes are opened in another world, we have strong reason to rest in hope that in our regard St. Liguori's prophecy will be verified.—‘If you release a soul from purgatory that soul will never cease before the throne of heaven to intercede with God for your salvation.’

“ My affectionate people, God be with you ! ”

CHAPTER XVII.

“ HIGH STREET,

“ BRITTAS, *October 2nd*, 187—.

“ MY DEAR SISTER,—Knowing how anxious you must be to hear from me I deem it my duty to let you know how I have been getting on since I left home. Well, to tell you the truth, I have never been at home since. More than that, never more do I expect to be. From the hour I took up my Latin grammar I have instinctively felt that I have for ever ceased to be a familiar element of the fond, happy paternal household. Why it should be so I can't say, but, alas ! Mary, so it is. Has God been dealing too severely with me ? My conscience emphatically answers no. All the same, I feel as if I had been sharply cut away from you all. Probably Christ will make the reunion all the more enjoyable bye and bye. I acquit my father of all responsibility in this delicate business. Neither can I hold you or mother or any body else blamable. If Father Healy and I have made a mistake, may God forgive us.

“In all my trials I shall always have one grand consolation. My mother’s strong faith is mine too. It will, I hope, be to me a prop and protector along the devious pathways of my mysterious pilgrimage. You have not, of course, ever been accustomed to such grandiloquent language as this, beneath our humble roof. But what’s the use of getting blind over expensive dictionaries if a body cannot pick out a few polysyllabic hieroglyphics for the innocuous edification of his late companions.

“With best wishes to you all,

“I am affectionately yours,

“ARTHUR HOGAN.”

“RAHEEN, *October 8th*, 187—.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—It was with trembling fingers I opened your letter. Being the first that has ever passed between us it filled my whole being with an almost unearthly kind of nervousness. At the contents I couldn’t give the faintest guess. I actually shivered lest you might be so dissatisfied as to have made up your mind to return home. I have been since thanking God that there was no foundation for my fears beyond the suspicion of my own feverish imagination. Your remark about being cut off from us has grievously pained us all. Not only

will you never be a stranger among us, but the fact that you will one day be a priest will serve only to sanctify and increase, if such were possible, our affection for you. We are all proud that some member of the family has been called to God's service. Though we are not, as you know, very rich, still you need never trouble yourself about the cost of your education. My father will pay for your clothes and books, and punctually settle your boarding bills and college expenses. Upon mother and myself you may always depend for an occasional sovereign for personal expenses. Acquainted, however, as I am so intimately with your habitual generosity it may not be out of place for me to advise you, even for your own sake, to be very careful about your money.

“ With affectionate regards from us all,

“ I am, your fond sister,

“ MARY HOGAN.”

“ P.S.—Father still continues the night instructions. We are all well; but the old home appears to me to have become a corpse-house since you left us.—M. H.”

Of the ten or twelve boys who commenced classics with him at Brittas College not one is more attentive to his studies than Arthur Hogan.

Though much older than the eldest, he is, perhaps, less advanced in general knowledge than the youngest among them. Thanks, however, to his father's care Arthur is comparatively well acquainted with the rules and difficulties of English grammar, and is by no means a stranger to the leading lights of English literature. Almost immediately after dinner, about four o'clock, does he daily betake himself to his books, over which, with the exception of a brief interval for tea, he remains as a rule till eleven at night. The people with whom he is boarding are very religious. The family consists of the parents—both exceptionally pious—one son, studying for the church, and two girls, who, report has it, have made up their minds to become nuns. In the midst of such congenial, agreeable, and tranquil surroundings, and being now taken up more and more with his studies, our young friend is rapidly getting cured of his home sickness and becoming more content with his new situation. Month after month finds him making good progress; and one morning when, with a light heart and a thorough knowledge of the day's business, he reaches the college and is about to enter he encounters one of the professors, a man of stern and almost puritanical countenance. A moment previously Arthur was

congratulating himself upon his satisfactory acquaintance with Valpy, Wettenhall, and Bain. Suddenly, as a lightning flash, his heart descends from the sky to his boots.

Sic loquitur, professor:

“For the last week or two I have been observing you coming up the avenue. Unless you make a successful effort to walk erect the sooner you discontinue wasting your father’s money and your own time in coming to college the better. If you cannot command a more presentable figure it is worse than useless for you to attempt to become a priest. With your head now on your chest, it would be, by the end of your course, almost touching your knees. It is not to hurt your feelings, remember, that I speak to you in this fashion. You have a bright, quick, though not exceptionally deep, intellect; your conduct has been invariably good; you are most obedient; and for your encouragement let me tell you that there is one professor, at least, who will be sorry if, through no fault of your own, you are compelled to suddenly cut short your college career.”

Poor Arthur! “May God help me,” he dolefully soliloquises as he marches off to the “Chubbery,” or Juniors’ Hall. Once or twice is he tempted to pitch his clerical aspirations

into the Suir and, with the valid excuse afforded him by the professor's remarks, to independently go home and resume his former position in his father's house. This temptation in its very inception he sees engulfed in one of the numerous, merciless, and mysterious chasms his conscience has excavated along the return journey. Better after all to give his vocation a fair trial, and not be cowed at the first reaction.

A few months after this calamity, the professors and students are assembled in the spacious theology hall for the usual monthly examinations. On the first Tuesday of every month students are indiscriminately selected from every class for public examination in the work done during the previous month. The number examined will depend on the number of subjects taught. If, for example, a class is being taught five different subjects, five different students, one from each subject, must mount the pillory. This quite unconscious instrument of uneasiness to so many minds consists of a wooden pulpit situated about ten yards from, and directly facing, the centre of a very long table, behind which the examiners are comfortably accommodated, and from which secure quarter they majestically turn their dozen and a half ocular organs towards, and hurl their intellectual javelins at, the rest-

less occupant of the "tub." At each side of the aforementioned tub and table are seated several rows of students facing each other, and thus completing, mathematically as it were, the quadratic outworks of the intervening purgatorial abyss.

To-day the examinations are surrounded by more than the usual palpitation. His Grace has announced his intention of being present. At 10 a.m. all occupy their respective places. To almost every pilloried individual the Archbishop puts at least one question, and occasionally takes the examination for the allotted ten minutes altogether into his own hands. Upon the clever neophytes he showers abundant praise. Towards the ordinary student he is just and kind; but with the dunce and "wobbler" he is, to use a common saying, "as wild as a March hare," and "as mad as a hatter."

Devoutly all this time is Arthur praying that his name may not, especially in the mathematical subjects, be deposited by the wheel of misfortune upon the table before the examiners. Most distinctly, all his supplications notwithstanding, does he hear his name called out by the president.

With tremulous step he ascends the rostrum ;

nearly faints as he sees the Archbishop take up the text-book, and for several seconds cannot distinguish the print on account of the uncontrollable condition of his optic nerves. His case, however, might be much worse. He has been called in his favourite subject—Virgil—and after correctly reading a short passage he finds himself perfectly at ease with Italy's prince of poets. He is next requested to give a brief sketch of the Trojan war. This he does to the evident satisfaction of his distinguished examiner. The portion prescribed for examination extends only to the fortieth line of the first book, and as Arthur had been for years a diligent reader of an illustrated mythological dictionary belonging to one of his late uncles, the eminent prelate is fairly astonished at his exceptional familiarity with such important, though doubtful, characters as Paris, Juno, and Ganymede. Asked if he can quote from memory any important verse, he promptly answers:—

“*Tantaene animis coelistibus irae?*” and
“*Tantae molis erat, Romanam condere gentem.*”

As he quits the pillory he is under the impression that he hears something like *optime* from, he believes, that very professor who so charitably, though somewhat rudely, sought some time ago to straighten his shoulders.

Pleased with the result, Arthur, on his arrival at home, pens the following verses :—

Parnell is true and brave,
Striving to guard and save
Ireland from foe and knave ;
But will he ever
Live to behold the right
Triumph o'er wrong and might ?
Oh, what a thrilling sight !
But, I fear, never.

Daily the Nations gaze,
Watching each other's ways,
Counting the bitter days
When into battle
Soldiers, as thick as rain,
Shall over hill and plain
March off the starved and slain—
Butchered like cattle !

Russia on England's bent ;
Prussia on France intent ;
Soon will the clouds be rent,
And then what slaughter !
England must take her share,
When the fierce Polar bear
Forth from his icy lair
Springs, and has caught her !

Where is the right hand now
Which for her oft did plough
Roads through her foes ; but how—
How was she treated ?

Robbed was she, starved, oppressed,
Banished or hanged her best,
Got, when she longed for rest,
Scourges repeated.

If to our native land
England should friendship's hand
Stretch out, by her we stand
Peace in, or battle.
But as ourselves may choose,
Should she our claims refuse,
We our bright swords will use
Where cannons rattle."

CHAPTER XVIII.

IT is the conviction of a large section of the laity that the duties of a priest are mere *recreation* and his life *extremely* pleasant! Except in cities and large towns rarely is his reverence bound to his week-day mass; he is always sure of a good table; he usually occupies a commodious and well-furnished house; a cordial reception everywhere awaits him: he generally owns the best groomed, if not the best bred, horse in the district; his word is law with his parishioners; he has no domestic troubles; no matter how bad the seasons his income never decreases, and in addition to his Christmas and Easter dues a most enjoyable, refreshing auriferous stream in the shape of baptisms, marriages, and fat intentions is continuously flowing adown his chest for the invigoration of his heart's action and the salutary exhilaration of his nervous system!

Why need we be surprised, therefore, that so many farmers' sons exchange the plough for the missal, and patiently endure the hardships of college life for the anticipated milk and honey beyond the Jordan?

Laymen adopt the occupation or profession to which they feel most inclined, and from the practice of which they hope to receive the best return. What more natural than that they should measure the motives and intentions of clerical aspirants by their own? These selfish young fellows who bid adieu to the farm for a residence in the diocesan seminary are influenced by commercial principles only! There is no such thing as a Divine vocation! Such texts as the following have no application to the youths of the present time:—

“Take unto thee also Aaron thy brother with his sons from among the children of Israel, that they may minister to me in the priest’s office.”

“Neither doth any man take unto himself this honour, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was.”

And when the place of Judas had to be supplied, the Apostles prayed:

“Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of men, show whether of these two Thou hast chosen?”

“He that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber.”

And again—

“You have not chosen Me; but I have chosen you, and have appointed you, that you should

go and should bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain.”

Owing to this criminal ignorance, is it that so many ecclesiastical students and priests who have been years on the mission, influenced, of course, by monetary considerations, abandon all claim to their native diocese and become attached to some religious order. Before their profession they are obliged to solemnly renounce all earthly wealth, submit their will to that of their superior, and go, wherever sent, to preach the Gospel, even though with the moral certainty of being martyred by your pig-tailed Chow, your treacherous Japanese, or your voracious cannibal of the South Sea Islands. The words of the great St. Paul are almost as truly applicable to the missionary priests of the present day who are preaching the word of God in China, Japan, the Pacific Islands as they were when written by him in the first century.

“For I think that God hath set forth as apostles, the last as it were men appointed to death, for we are made a spectacle of the world, and to angels and to men.”

“We are fools for Christ’s sake, but you are wise in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are honourable, but we without honour are buffeted and have no fixed abode.”

So you see that after all, my commercial friends, it is possible to view men's motives through more reliable spectacles than the greedy goggles of the stock exchange. The fact is that no one but a fool or a lunatic would dare become a priest unless he feels himself called by God to that holy state.

The ecclesiastical burglar who scrambles in on his face and hands through the window, or some other forbidden entrance, is likely to meet with a fractured forehead, and be branded as a castaway by his fellowmen and as a selfish hypocrite by the church he has so wantonly betrayed.

But "The souls of the just (the zealous pastors) are in the hands of God, and the torment of death shall not touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, and their departure was taken for misery; and their going away from us as utter destruction; but they are in peace. Afflicted in few things, in many they shall be rewarded, because God hath tried them and found them worthy of Himself."

After two or three raps on Father Feehan's door, the excited features of our classical friend Dan abruptly confront the reverend occupant. Panting like an escaped hare the unwelcome intruder explains:

“ He’s coming down the hill now, Father, and ’ll be here in less than ten minutes.”

“ Well, suppose he is, and suppose he will, is that sufficient justification for your unpardonable rusticity in thus so unceremoniously obtruding your Punch and Judy face into my quiet study? With all your classical acumen you are deplorably ignorant of the simplest rules of etiquette. Why, I wouldn’t have expected such an exhibition from a fellow who couldn’t scan the first line of Homer or tell the difference between a spondee and a dactyl. Be off, you screeching Cassandra, and should you ever again so far forget yourself the irrevocable sentence of this court shall be—‘Dan Cleary is hereby unpardonably discharged from Father Feehan’s service.’ ”

“ Poor Dan,” generously soliloquises his master, “ the most loyal and reliable priest’s man I have ever known.”

CHAPTER XIX.

FATHER KIELY.

FATHER KIELY, fresh from New South Wales, occupies at Ballymore the position of junior curate in his native diocese. For years the Archdiocese of Cashel has been supplying priests far beyond its actual requirements, so that about a dozen of the newly-ordained are obliged every year to accept temporary missions elsewhere. In some cases these young levites are so pleased with life in alien lands that, having obtained their exeat from their archbishop they become affiliated to the diocese into which they were first adopted. This commendable course Father Kiely for some weeks before he returned to Ireland was strongly tempted to imitate. An urgent note, however, recalling him to fill a vacancy in the archdiocese left him no option. From his Australian bishop he received the highest credentials. The episcopal document panegyricized in eulogistic terminology (which even bishops diplomatically use occasionally) the many and varied ecclesiastical works of the departing subject. The grateful subject, as in

duty bound, gracefully thanked his lordship, swallowed the eulogy with a mouthful of salt, and ever since quaintly smiles and winks to himself as often as he takes a sly glance of his missionary face in the bishop's mirror. At other times, after due examination of conscience, Father Kiely believes himself guilty of rash judgment. The letter, it is true, was complimentary beyond all expectation. Still the bishop may have sincerely meant all he had written. Besides, wasn't he, Father Kiely, more than once publicly praised by his lordship, hadn't they always lived on the best of terms, and if it pleased his superior to thicken the marmalade here and there what matter?

The following ought to be sufficient to satisfy the most sceptical:—

“Should you ever feel inclined to leave your own diocese and be tempted to work once more amongst us, you may rest assured of a cordial welcome and of being placed in charge of a district more desirable, if possible, than the one which you have during the past three years so ably managed.”

Frequently and vividly does this well-conned letter bring to the new curate's mind the trials and the triumphs, the joys and sorrows that were almost daily his during the twelve years,

mental and physical strain on the Australian mission. To-night in his silent little room is he in spirit again among his late parishioners. The pulpit from which he so often addressed them, the confessional he occupied with so much zeal and patience, the parochial schools in whose efficiency he was so interested, his religious teachers who worked so well, the isolated catechism classes in the bush, the distant sick calls, the annual picnic and St. Patrick's Day celebrations, the diocesan conferences, the clerical gatherings, and a thousand other Austral reminiscences woo and captivate for the time being his every thought and feeling. The magic scenery and indescribable beauties of Sydney Harbour lie before him. With keen delight he strolls along the picturesque banks of the Hawkesbury, light-heartedly gallops again through old Monaro, pays a flying visit to some of his former friends at Bathurst, Goulburn, and Wagga, and with, before retiring to rest, a kind farewell to Albury and Melbourne he bids a fond good night to his loved Australian associations and to the sunny regions of New South Wales.

CHAPTER XX.

“BRITTAS, *July 12th*, 187—.

“MY DEAR SISTER,—By every post lately I have been expecting a reprimand for having allowed the two loveliest months of the year to silently glide into eternity without even the ghost of a letter from me. But you must excuse me. I have been studying very hard for the approaching examinations ; so hard indeed that for the past fortnight I have been invalided through overwork. My brain, I fear, is not very robust, so that whenever I unduly tax it I am ever sure to be afterwards called upon to bear the penalty. Frequently I think what a consolation it might be to my friends if, after a proper preparation for the long mysterious journey, I should be told there was a vacant seat in old man Charon’s boat, and to hurry up. It pains me to be the cause of trouble to others, especially strangers. At the same time I am happy to be able to let you know that the people of this home could not be kinder to me than they are. The old couple are amiability itself. Joe is very obliging, and only that I might make

you the smallest bit jealous, which I wouldn't for the world, I might be tempted to imagine in a vague, far-off kind of fashion that both the girls are good-looking. They are very fond of music, and tell me I should try my hand with the violin. At present I cannot accede to their request. With these pipes eternally whizzing around my throat and lungs I have more music than I care for to keep me company. Sometimes I feel disposed to condemn myself for being such a slave to my studies ; but then I had to do one of two things—work very hard, and reap the reward at the annual distribution, or take the world easy, and occupy a discreditable place in class afterwards. Notwithstanding all my exertions my efforts, I'm afraid, are doomed to failure.

“ During my illness I have been devouring the poets wholesale. Moore, Byron, and Burns have been my constant companions. Up to a short time ago I was under the impression they were the three greatest poetical lights in English literature ; now I know better. Ever since I left home Joe has been advising me to have an hour or two with Shakespeare. Not to be too obstinate I at last obeyed. I have already read, or studied rather, ‘ The Tempest,’ Macbeth, and Julius Cæsar. I think I like the first best. The conversation between the lovers outside

Prospero's cell is as sweet poetry as I have ever read. The two other plays are, perhaps, more powerful, but more difficult to understand. Many a time when reading 'The Tempest' did I think of you, and one dear to you and me and all at home came vividly before me as I read :—

Be of comfort.

My father's of a better nature, Sir,
Than he appears by speech.

“ And, Mary, so he is. Every day of my life do I grieve that you have to work so hard, and on my account too. Cheerfully would I share and lighten your labour only that I am impelled by some strong force along the dimly-defined way that lies before me. I fear the future. It is all mystery ; and this choking asthma that, like a detested leech, day and night clings to me, seems to be constantly droning into my ears that, ordained or not, I shall be an invalid for life. If I were rich I could, I think, carry my cross with silent patience. But my keenest sorrow is that my enlightenment must be the source of oppressive weight to others. In writing in such plain language I'm sure I hurt your feelings ; but it can't be helped ; I can't dissemble. Foolish I know I have ever been ; I am foolish still. But there are greater sins than folly. The foolish man is gene-

rally pitied, and frequently helped along. The hypocrite is despised and shunned. Once and for ever let me bluntly tell you that I imperatively need some unselfish and shrewd friend to whom in all my joys and sorrows I can go with unbounded confidence and satisfaction. You are, of all the world, the only one to fully supply that want. Am I wrong in thus opening to you my heart, my conscience, and my soul? If you say 'yes' I'll be as circumspect as a Roman conspirator. But yes or no,

“ Believe me,

“ Yours unchangeably affectionate,

“ ARTHUR HOGAN.”

“ P.S.—Best wishes to you all. Remember me to all my Raheen friends and comrades, and don't forget to tell grandfather and Billy Mallon that I never go on my knees but I pray for them.—A. H.”

“ RAHEEN, *July 16th*, 187—.

“ MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have just received your kind, welcome letter, and I needn't tell you that I am very sorry, though not much surprised, to hear that you have had another visit from your old ailment. It must be miserable to have to sit up at night in a strange house and, in addition, to be troubled in mind about your

studies. I promise to pray most fervently that this attack may be very brief, and that you may soon be strong enough to resume your place in college. I have come to the conclusion that, no matter how we live, we cannot escape trouble. My work, which you think is very hard, is nothing more than healthy recreation. But when I think of your illness and anxieties I cannot find words to accurately describe the compassionate feelings of sympathy I have for you. Mother often talks sadly about Uncle John's early death, but I tell her that the poor priest is better off. Had he lived it would only be to witness desolation in all directions, and all his people degraded to the level of slaves, striving to scrape the rent together. And now I don't know how I ought to break the sad news I have for you. Two of your dearest Raheen friends have been laid to rest in their silent graves. They were both buried on the same day, and not far from one another, in the same old churchyard. The place, sad enough before, will now be more gloomy than ever. Poor grandfather was like a child during his last sickness. The beads and crucifix were either continuously clasped in his hands or within his reach. He received the Holy Viaticum several times, and was anointed about ten days before his death. He breathed his last in my father's arms and in

the presence of Father Feehan—my mother and all of us reciting, with tearful eyes, the ‘Litany of the Dying’ for the grace of a holy death. Before it was half over I somehow instinctively felt our prayers were answered. He died as calmly as a person gently falling asleep. You were the last in his mind. Slowly and with a great effort, without mentioning your name, he said in disjointed words:—‘Tell him I longed to see him, and not to forget me.’ These were the last words he ever spoke.

“We were all anxious to have you at the funeral, but we were commanded by a sincere friend to keep the whole matter a secret from you, as it would be only madness to attempt so long a journey with your health in such a delicate state. As soon as ever my mother commences to be herself again I must take a run in to see you and tell you everything. I must tell you about poor Billy Mallon too. For three or four days before he died he was passionately longing to see you and Father Healy. You may judge of his delight when he beheld once more the saintly presence of his old friend beside his pillow. He asked for you over and over again. Though attended frequently by Father Feehan, he received the final absolution from Father Healy. ‘Oh, Father, may God reward you

for driving so many miles to see me off' were the last intelligible accents that passed his lips.

"Every month the district seems to be getting more lonely and deserted. Not only are the old people gradually slipping into the grave, but the boys and girls are leaving in numbers for America. In a few years there will be none left but the young children and the parents. I wonder is God angry with the country or is it that Providence has some great end in view in sending away the Irish to plant and keep alive the faith in Canada and the United States? Father Kiely tells us that the Australian Catholics are very good, but that, as a rule, they haven't the strong faith of the first settlers. He is dead against emigration. 'Better,' he says, 'for the people to remain at home, and work hard for themselves in their own country, than be but servants to hard masters in other lands, and with a doubtful prospect of bettering their position, and so situated that they run a great risk of becoming very careless and indifferent. He could mention several Irishmen, some of them in the highest positions, who abandoned the church altogether, got married to Protestant partners, and brought up Protestant families. Isn't that deplorable? Oughtn't it be enough to keep the people at home? Ah! but then

Ireland is becoming so lonely. Houses are being daily levelled with the ground. It is almost impossible to get a servant girl. Funerals, graves, and the emigrant ship are the usual subjects of conversation. Only for the constant work I have had during our late sorrow I believe I would have died with weeping. Poor, dear grandfather, so kind and good and gentle! Well do I remember, and you too, that awful day when we were all thrown out by Benson, and had to clear away with no roof nearer than God's blue sky, and no friend to give us shelter but him, whose body now lies cold in the grave to-night, but whose soul is, I'm sure, with Christ in heaven. When I meditate on these things you have no idea how I have to pray to keep in subjection my father's temper that boils within me. You are more fortunately constituted. Hardly ever have I seen you angry. You have often seen me in a passion; God forgive me, and I know He will. Think of noble, charitable grandfather in his confined cell; poor Billy Mallon not far away from him; John Sweeney, Tim Bourke, Nora Murphy, Mick Gorman, and a whole lot of others gone to America. Oh! I am sad and nearly savage. Not for my own sake at all, not so much on your account either, but for dear old Ireland's sake—God's sake.

Soon there will be no Ireland left for us to love and honour and be proud of. Soon will the foreigner occupy the country, and Munster, I fear, be a second Ulster. Nearly all our old abbeys belong to heretics. Soon I fear the invaders may take possession of our chapels and cathedrals. Let them; if we are unworthy of them, let them go.

“I crave your pardon. All the same, what good is life, however hopeful, when all around is dismal as the tomb? But we must be reconciled to what is after all, I suppose, God’s inscrutable decree. When despondent I recall our sacred promise to keep, except to one another, our griefs concealed from all the world. Excuse me for being so outspoken, and I’m sure you will. The knowledge, not acquired yesterday or the day before, that I possess your confidence and affection emboldens me to candidly speak out my mind, and even tell you that, if necessary, I wouldn’t hesitate to sacrifice my life to have you a worthy priest at God’s altar.

“Oh! but if you were here now, with all your sickness, how with your good-natured humour you would make me feel ashamed. I have taken up the book which I believe you would put into my hand if you were here. Reading so often to you laid up with asthma has given me a great

taste for poetry. Somehow I think I hear you say—‘Open Longfellow at page 48.’

“Having done so I read:—

There is no flock however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there!

There is no fire-side howsoe’er defended,
But has one vacant chair!

The air is full of farewells to the dying
And moanings for the dead;
The heart of Rachel for her children crying
Will not be comforted!

Let us be patient; these severe afflictions
Not from the ground arise,
But often times celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mist and vapours,
Amid these earthly lamps,
What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers,
May be heaven’s distant lamps.

And though at times impetuous, with emotion
And anguish long suppressed,
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,
That cannot be at rest.

We will be patient and assuage the feeling,
We may not wholly stay;
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,
The grief that must have way.

“Oh, how I long to meet you,

“Ever yours affectionately

“MARY HOGAN.”

CHAPTER XXI.

A LETTER FROM ARTHUR TO MARY.

“MY DEAR SISTER,—Just as the asthma and its bronchial companion were about to take their temporary departure your sorrowful letter makes its appearance. Everything has been for the best. Our two dear departed friends are, I hope, by this in heaven, and praying with all their might for the salvation of the unselfish friends they left behind them. Take not their loss too much to heart. It is sinful to find fault with God’s wise ways. The greatest man alive is but a frail atom in creation, and never can the patiently obedient Christian soul fail to receive its worthy reward.

“For your nobly thoughtful communication I am most grateful. But we must bear our cross courageously. The annual examinations are near at hand ; for the next week I must practically think of nothing else. Until they are over I don’t wish to even see you. That may seem selfish, but it is the correct course for me to adopt. During vacation I promise to be a most sympathetically interested listener. In the mean-

time I must, as a question of duty, concentrate all my attention upon my studies.

“In less than three months our homely little family here will be broken up. By that time the two girls will have entered a convent in Ghent, Belgium. Their brother has decided to become a Redemptorist, and your own distinguished servant will be obliged to become a member of the collegiate household. After a twelve month’s residence there I am almost certain to obtain a free place at Maynooth. This means that I shall be of no further educational expense to my parents. There are sixteen of us in the rhetoric class; and, barring another attack before the examination, I am sure to be among the three first for Latin, Greek, French, English, and English History. I am amongst the last in Mathematics.

“You cannot imagine how happy I have been during the four years spent with this exemplary family. I can never forget their uniform kindness and unfeigned friendship. For my proficiency, such as it is, in French am I to a great extent indebted to the two sisters, and to their brother’s persevering exhortations do I owe my taste and love for Shakespeare. May heaven’s choicest blessings be for ever theirs.

“Reverting, to use a big word, to the occupants

of the two newly-closed graves, take heed lest you have already condemned me for having despatched this delicate subject with such apparent apathy.

“Let me tell you that I have had to struggle hard when commencing this letter to restrain my feelings. I have triumphed; but I will not be ashamed to allow my tears a copious outlet when next I meet you.

“Unchangeably yours,

“ARTHUR HOGAN.”

CHAPTER XXII.

ARTHUR'S LETTER TO HIS MOTHER.

“ HIGH STREET,
“ BRITTAS, , 187—.

“ MY FOND MOTHER,—Most humbly do I beg your forgiveness for not having written to sympathise with you in the sorrowful affliction that has thrown so much gloom over the dear old house in which we have all spent so many happy and, let me add, so many holy days together. From the moment the sad news reached me never during my working, as well as my lonely wakeful, hours has your emaciated affectionate face been, in imagination, a stranger to me. To you I owe more than to any other human being. You have been always so good towards me, and so good towards all the others too ; so prudent in uniting us obediently to our father's somewhat severe rule of life ; you have set as a child towards your dear, dead father an example that I'm sure will not be without a salutary influence on the lives of Mary and Kathleen. Oh, when the sad news arrived, if I had allowed my pent-up feelings free outlet

I would have broken down, would never have been able to go through the annual examinations, and, as a consequence, might have to wait a year longer before I could get a free place at Maynooth. You and father and my hard-working brothers and my two affectionate sisters would, I know, make any sacrifice for me. But I am determined to make the burden of my education as light as I can for the shoulders of those whom in my heart of hearts I respect and love. Mary has, of course, shown you all my letters. Mary is the biggest-hearted girl I have ever met, and possesses more shrewdness and common sense than you and I put together. Be kind to her. You know her; she is too unselfish. Were I rich, poor Mary would never be the slave she is. But the good God knows best.

“Thanks be to God, the examinations and distributions are all over, and, sad to tell you, I am invalided. For the past twenty-four hours I have been the patiently intermediate subject of two unmercifully stinging mustard plasters. At this rate, very soon my unfortunate chest will be only skin and bone. Let it. Were I strong and healthy my heart mightn’t be as affectionate as it is, and I might be a bit of an upstart despot in my own small, mean, miserable way. Heaven be thanked for keeping me in subjection. You

would be ashamed of me if I complained, and more ashamed still if, because of the chance God gave me over all the others, I were to assume any superiority. That I feel confident will be the last displayed element of my consumptively diseased composition. My dear, fond mother, believe me when I tell you that I would be much more happy in serving than in being served. I hate publicity. I love home ; love my parents ; love my brothers and sisters ; love the neighbours ; love the old castle ; love the churchyard ; love the rich meadows, the lofty mountains. the sparkling streams, the hills, the moors and valleys of my native land. Pray with all your might that I may be to the end what I think I now am, like Mary, unselfish. One day or another I may be a priest, and I never may be. Should I ever be, your strong faith and charitable heart never will, to my last breath, be forgotten. God's ways are strange ; but if we could understand them, which I at present cannot, they are, I suppose, always best for, if not our bodies, our immortal souls. Anyhow, notwithstanding all the cod liver oil I have consumed and all the mustard plasters that have been consuming me I dare not attempt leaving at present where I am. In the meantime I promise you to rest quietly contented. There is on earth only one

other house in which I could be more at home than I am here. Isn't that good enough for me ?

"You know how I love and always have loved poetry. Let me quote a few lines, and with the quotation end this letter :—

Our home is beyond the tide, mother—

Our home is beyond the tide ;

And we must not sigh for those earthly joys

'Best wisdom' hath denied.

For the thorns of earth there are flowers in heaven,

For its cares there is long repose ;

For the vale of tears, there's the mount of joy

Where the heart with rapture glows.

Then, with loving hearts we will do His will,

In whose presence our hearts confide,

And patiently wait for our turn to reach

Our home beyond the tide.

"God be with you, and good night, till I'm strong enough to reach home.

"Ever obediently and affectionately yours,

"ARTHUR HOGAN."

ARTHUR HOGAN WRITES TO HIS SISTER.

"HIGH STREET,

"BRITTAS, 187—.

"Being still too weak to start for home, and so tired of and disgusted with books and study,

I have decided to afford myself the congenial luxury of a long epistolary conversation with you. First of all let me tell you that I got on successfully at the examinations, and, consequently, had the satisfaction of seeing my name prominently outlined in the prize list. Never, I believe, have I explained this aspect of collegiate life to you. Let me take my own class as an example. During the year we have been studying seven subjects—Latin, Greek, French, English, English History, Geometry, and Algebra. For each subject three prizes were given, and on an average three students were called to cut for each prize. The three most advanced cut for the first prize, the three next in merit for the second, and the three next for the third. So that nine of the sixteen stood a chance of getting a book. Our class received twenty-one prizes, and as each cost, at least, five shillings, we must have got books to the value of five guineas. I was called in every subject except Algebra, and was four times successful. The books I won are ‘Macaulay’s Essays,’ ‘Newman’s Callista,’ ‘Fabiola,’ by Cardinal Wiseman, and the plays and poems of dear old Goldsmith. The last is the only one I have as yet read; it is superb. The other three will have to wait in peace till my health returns.

Judging from a slight glance through them, I'm afraid it will take me a long time to become enamoured of the productions of the cold Saxon pen. They are, as a rule, too frigid for my Celtic nature—too formal; too methodical. Irishmen see things in a more general light, and measure life with a different tape. Yesterday I wrote a few lines, which to-day I am posting to you in all their freshness.

TO THE CRUCIFIX.

What was it that I knelt before
In childhood days, long since no more,
And ever with me fondly bore—
The Crucifix.

What was it on that dismal day,
When driven from our home away,
Enforced me for the tyrant pray—
The Crucifix.

What is it I would wish to be,
When I on earth no more can see,
Affectionately clasped by me—
The Crucifix.

Oh! Jesus grant me in Thy love,
Through life all earthly joys above
To hold and prize where e'er I rove,
The Crucifix.

“Do you like the verses? I love them,

but then tastes differ like doctors, and patients die.

“ Affectionately yours,

“ ARTHUR HOGAN.”

“ P.S.—Within the next three or four days I'll very probably make my appearance at home when least expected.—A. H.”



CHAPTER XXIII.

A CLERICAL DISCUSSION.

“FATHER KIELY, in all Ireland there is no priest to whom heaven has been kinder than to me. As curate I had the good fortune of being sent to work under two excellent pastors. Rarely was either known to be in bed, summer or winter, after six o’clock. They invariably said their daily Mass; never neglected the Rosary, and allowed no day to pass without paying at least one visit to the Blessed Sacrament. Towards their curates and servants they were kindness itself. They weren’t, of course, perfect; no man is. They were, however, as near perfection as the most exacting could expect, and at this distant date I entertain for their edifying lives filial sentiments of the utmost respect and affection. Had I more strictly followed in their footsteps I would have been a better priest. But we must all be allowed to carve out our own career after each one’s peculiar disposition. We priests have, I fear, an ingrained inclination to unjustly criticise the actions, or what might be perhaps more charitably called the mannerisms,

of our fellow-workers. God never created any two objects exactly alike in all particulars. In the supernatural as well as in the natural order is frequently verified the saying that 'what's one man's meat is another man's poison.' We would be all Cæsars. Should one of our body preach a brilliant sermon or write a devotional manual for his people, ah, me, don't we come down suddenly and unmercifully, like a thousand of bricks, upon him! We of course could, if we only took the trouble, write much more correctly than he has written. Sentence after sentence has he left without a verb to keep the nominative case company. And, oh, abomination of desolations! how often has he not left the verb in all its frailty without the protecting arms of a nominative partner or the subsequent relationship of even an indirect objective champion. Pride, envy, and ambition are a priest's worst enemies. Humility, charity, and generosity his best friends. From Genesis to the Apocalypse, the chapter after the sermon on the Mount I love the best is St. Paul's XIII. to the Corinthians. Bear with me while I give to you the sentence in that golden chapter that has ever most affectionately taken possession of my heart—

'Charitas numquam excidit.'

'Charity never falleth away.' ”

“All right, Doctor, but if we by our charity make this earth of ours a paradise, how, with a light heart, can we bid her ladyship farewell when we hear the paralysing accents of the inexorable *redde rationem villicationis tuæ* tingling in our ears ? ”

“You’re perfectly right ; we must all have our ups and downs. ‘It is the bright day that brings forth the adder ; and that craves wary walking.’ ”

“Excuse me, Father. *Senectus est loquacior*. In other words, I am but a tiresome, if not an offensive, cackler of other days. Oh, but I am grateful for your presence under this roof. When Father Healy left, never for a moment did I dream I should receive at the hands of any other priest the considerate treatment he so uniformly bestowed upon me. His tastes lay in hard, constant work. From daylight to dark was he ever constantly engaged in parochial duties—visiting the sick, comforting the dying, consoling the afflicted, instructing the children, and at night with me for an hour or two like a fond, unselfish child with a feeble father. He loved his breviary, beads, and pious books. The classics he hardly ever opened. Yet he was a most entertaining conversationalist. Ever cheerful, rarely demonstrative, and apparently

never unhappy. How you in the bush could have kept up your spirit of study is a mystery to me. The home people have a hazy notion that the inhabitants of that distant continent are only semi-civilized. From what you say I believe we are mistaken."

"Of course you are. America, Canada, and Australia urgently need the ablest and holiest priests the church can send them. In Ireland devotional zeal is, as a rule, more conducive towards the people's salvation than gigantic ability. In foreign countries the priest comes into contact with various nationalities and with all creeds and classes. To be a success he must be an educated gentleman. It would be a good thing if your Irish Missionary Colleges would appoint five or six of their ablest representatives to visit the English-speaking quarters of the globe; study their ecclesiastical wants conscientiously, and on their return to Ireland report accordingly. Your Irish colleges, Doctor, are behind the age. Every Irish college ought to be, as is the case at Maynooth, compelled to pay a decent salary to its professors and to throw open every vacant chair for competition to every priest in Ireland. Occasionally, if not frequently, a priest is appointed professor in a provincial college simply because there is no

other place vacant in the diocese. He may be qualified for the position or he may not. That point I don't care to discuss or dispute. All I maintain is that the professorial staff should be the ablest that, at least, the diocese, if not the whole of Ireland, can supply. It pains me to speak harshly, even in private, about our collegiate institutions. But I only state the naked truth. Ireland is isolated. To the social, scientific, commercial, artistic, and intellectual advancement of the surrounding nations she is a benighted stranger. Unless some change for the better takes place soon Ireland's children must continue to be, for generations, what they are at present at home and abroad—the despised and degraded servants of alien masters. The Australian Catholics are very good. They are generous and loyal towards their clergy. As a rule they love their priests, but in the higher walks of life it is rare to find a Catholic, except a slimy creature who has sold his soul for the 'Devil's dismal stock of returns.' ”

“Your hot-house reared clerical plants take a long time to become practically acclimatised to their foreign surroundings ; and then, because we happen to be ordained, we ignorantly presume we are thoroughly equipped for all emergencies. The plain fact is, that no other being more

imperatively needs God's enlightenment, direction, and protection than does the priest. In years I am comparatively young, in experience and slavish work I am very old. Even so, I would rather wear out in Australia than rust out in Ireland. I love my native land; but, Doctor, I am a gardener on a small scale. If year after year you take a crop off your kitchen garden without putting on it manure of any kind, what ultimately but nettles, weeds, and rubbish can you expect from it. And if your Irish National schools and unprogressive provincial colleges are not roused from their sleepy habits I for one will not be surprised if our people become lukewarm towards the church, and ultimately take the management of the political situation altogether into their own hands. The church should stand or fall with justice. The oppressed should be protected. Were we less eloquent we would be more practical; and one Catholic bishop, or even an ordinary priest, done to death in Kilmainham would do more for Irish liberty than all the eloquent pastorals that have ever been sent forth from Royal Maynooth College. My blood boils and my brain becomes inflamed when I think of the gruesome deeds of landlordism and the base submission of the Celtic character to such

a servile code. Were your Irish tyrants dealing with Americans or Australians they would be shot down like Dingoes or Riverina rabbits, and left with but a parasite or two and the undertaker to attend their funeral."

"Well then, Father, you would have no scruple in clearing them all out, bag and baggage."

"Not the slightest. Within record time, had I the power, I'd clear them all out, but the baggage I'd take good care to keep behind. The Irish tenants as a body must have paid for their holdings ten times over, and when the Irish land problem comes up for solution it is the tenants and not the blood-suckers should get compensation. But, Doctor, enough of this miserable subject. Let us turn towards some of your old favourites—Homer, Virgil, Horace, Shakespeare, or Milton. I hate controversy; I long to see things go ahead. And between you and me and that old green biretta of yours (a disgrace to the establishment) I am seriously inclined to throw in my lot for life on the Australian mission."

"But you would never dream of turning your back for ever on your native land?"

"Wouldn't I? I affectionately love Ireland; but since my return I have never been able to contemplate her servile degradation without

feelings of wild impatience and an almost uncontrollable propensity to publicly encourage the tenants to resist the evictor with the most efficaciously destructive weapons they could lay their hands on. To me Ireland seems to be crawling on all fours. And for what? For the privilege of sending her starved-to-death children into their untimely graves and to pamper injustice and debauchery. If the landlords have justice on their side, let them get their rents at any cost; if they are but legalised robbers, let them be treated like so many bubonic rats. That, were I arbitrator, would be my decision. My conviction is that the tenants are being most inhumanly plundered, and that it will be a blessed day for them and Ireland when the plague-propagating vermin will be unmercifully scalded out."

CHAPTER XXIV.

COMPARING NOTES.

“ I REGRET that, in accordance with my rule of life, I had to retire last night just as our conversation was becoming most interesting. No matter how much we study we are very ignorant of the world's ways except we travel. And although I cannot agree with all your judgments and opinions, nor you with mine, isn't it refreshing for us to meet as equals, and agree to differ ? Don't be jealous ; my thoughts, and indeed my affections too, continuously go out to Father Healy. He is one of the holiest priests that ever laboured for God's poor. I believe he will die soon. He never spares himself. He is all energy, and a born worker. You and others rest occasionally. God forgive me, I always ; he never. Preaching is not his forte. Still, though he will have to take his turn before one of the largest congregations in Ireland, speaking as one who knows him well, I predict that his features, redolent of his heart's nobility and sincerity, will, with his homely words, be more persuasive than the ostentatious periods of your

would-be Bourdaloues. In every sense of the word, Father Healy is a true priest ; God be with him."

"In other words, Doctor, the devil run away with Father Kiely ? "

"No ; you have charitably taken his place. You towards me have been kindness personified ; and though I be a somewhat too aggressive *laudator temporis acti*, don't be too severe with me. Everything, even death, with its ghastly cross-bones, comes to him who waits. Soon will my corpse be squeezed within its narrow limits. Shortly will I be forgotten. Willingly and speedily will my parishioners get rid of my decomposing clay ; and happy, I think, will my departed soul be if among them there be found a few that, free from all worldly care and from the heart, will pray : May God have mercy on him. Oh, let us not expect to get from those who come after us more than we have given our predecessors. You have travelled over more lands than I have. Many a bleak winter went I through before you were born. Rapidly am I going down the slope ; I almost feel my naked feet touch the eternal shore."

"Yes, Doctor, and from my acquaintance with you, you need have no fear. Would that I had such a record. But however mean our work for Christ we must have courage. He who forgave

Magdalen, the Samaritan woman, the broken-hearted prodigal, and the penitent thief has mercy enough left to forgive His priests. To no other class, in my opinion, will He be more generous. No matter how many our mistakes or failings the clerical soul, with faith in Calvary's sacrifice, need not despair. *Omnes erravimus sicut oves qui perierunt*. Even so, Christ is ever ready to make allowance for the frailties and temptation of flesh and blood. A man like you afraid to die ! Havn't we been constantly preaching the salutary gospel of Christ's forgiveness to our congregations ? Well do I remember the trying fasts, the long journeys, the hospital visitations, and the thousand other duties that were almost daily mine during my laborious, yet comparatively happy, because contented, time in Australia. More than once did I drive over thirty miles and, after hearing twelve or fifteen confessions, commence Mass at the appointed hour, ten o'clock. Twice had I to sleep out at night in the lonely bush, with the saddle for a pillow and the canopy of heaven my nearest roof. Several times had I to start after sunset to attend a patient fifty or sixty miles away. My experience was not exceptional nor my work more fatiguing than that of the neighbouring priests. If, notwithstanding this

slavish work, cheerfully done for Christ's sake, we be lost, no hesitation, Doctor, have I in saying with St. Paul, that we priests are of all men the most miserable. But I, for one, do not believe we shall be lost. I believe the vast majority of the priests will save their souls. Here and there among us is, of course, to be found the Scriptural wolf in sheep's clothing. But of all such, how brief the reign—how sad the end! As it was from the beginning, so is it now, and ever will be. For my own part I have ever acted on the philosophical advice of the man who declared that it is time enough to salute the devil when we meet him. I am very grateful, Doctor, for your hospitality, and although I never wish to replace Father Healy in your affections, I can, I think, with confidence, promise that in all my relations with you you will find me *semper et ubique fidelis*. Good night and a sound sleep."

"To you, Father, the same, and happy dreams."

CHAPTER XXV.

DAN AND MARY.

THROUGHOUT Tipperary there is no happier home than Father Feehan's. In it harmony, good fellowship, and regularity reign supreme. Iconoclastic Dan is reconciled to Mary's system. It took him some time to realise that her caustic treatment of gossipers was only bare justice towards the presbytery. Dan would now rather see a process-server coming in the gate than a woman with a tongue constructed upon the perpetual motion principle.

"Well, Mary, I must confess that I was a slave to deception in so far as I was under the impression that a man could accurately diagnose the eccentric convolutions of the feminine character. Isn't it a felicitous kitchen we have all to ourselves, and as good a table as the priests, barring the delay of the dinner—everything nice and cosy. Some time ago I used to be seriously cogitating about entering Mount Melleray as a lay brother; but your appetising dishes, Mary, and my fifteen pounds a year have smithereened my quadragesimal contemplations.

Up, I'm informed, at two o'clock every morning ; never allowed to talk to anybody except yourself, I thank you ; practically buried alive, and never to have the satisfaction of contemplating the countenances of your friends till the day of judgment. Since my enlistment into Father Feehan's service, eight years ago, I have been prudently banking all my coppers. If I were to join the monks now I'd have to shell out all my earnings into their *corbona*. Wisha, faith, Mary, between you and me and the teapot, I have changed my mind. In another year I hope to be so pecuniarily situated as to be in a position to make a start in life for myself and some one else. The invincible Roman was perfectly correct in his enunciation that it is preferable for a man to be first in a village than play second fiddle in a big city. In other words, that it is more satisfactory to be the owner of a comfortable little cottage for oneself than be in a subordinate position, no matter how conspicuous or elevated. Still there is some risk in connection with the experiment. I may never be so happy as I am at present. But I have crossed the Rubicon, mentally at least, and as soon as ever I can procure a suitable fellow to take my place I shall strike out and take the consequences. 'Faint heart,' they say,

‘never won fair lady,’ and from what I have read here and there it seems that the ladies despise nothing in men more than cowardice nor admire any quality more than courage, however reckless. Nobody, except myself, is aware of the doctor’s generosity towards me. Many and many a sovereign, Mary, has he imparted to your humble servant for reading his classical favourites to him at night. Had he never given me a penny I’d do the reading all the same. But the golden dust makes the pleasure all the greater. I’m no elocutionist, Mary, but for the accent, emphasis, rising, inflection, and intonation I am all there. Father Feehan’s threats of dismissal are only indications of his approval. Father Kiely’s bark is worse than his bite. Of all the priests I ever met he seems to have the least love for money. He likes to get it all right, but scarcely has he taken possession of it than he proceeds to get rid of it miscellaneously. All things, therefore, being duly considered and sensibly weighed together I have come to the conclusion that if I’m not satisfied with my present condition and future expectations I really deserve to be abruptly transported to some unexplored locality or to the Scilly Islands. Learning beyond his sphere of life, they say, is no use for a poor man. That’s

all bosh. Education is a light commodity and a much safer and more serviceable companion than ignorance. The three most useful years of my existence were those spent with Horace and Virgil at poor Purcell's academy. In my solitary domicile at night many a contented hour do I spend with the best and wisest men that ever lived. When satisfied with the ancients I politely salute the moderns, and so varied is my literary knowledge, Mary, that at a moment's notice I can put my digits on the book whose contents coincide for the time being most congenially with my mental inclinations."

"Your mental inclinations! I'll give you ten minutes to finish your dinner, and if, after that, you haven't the plates and dishes like so many looking-glasses I'll tell Father Feehan how you spend much more time about the kitchen than you do about the stables."

"And with what result, mavourneen?"

"That you'll be immediately dismissed."

"Not a bit of it—*causa causæ est causa causati*—the cause of the cause is the cause of the thing caused. Besides, Mary, *rari boni*—good grooms are scarce."

"For goodness sake give your foolish tongue a rest and finish your dinner. If you give me a hand at the washing up I may have time after

tea to-night to listen to your childish rigmarole about Dido's affection for your Trojan hero."

"All right, my jewel. You hand me the plates, saucers, knives, forks, spoons, dishes, *et hoc genus omne*, and if within the subsequent fifteen minutes I haven't them fit to be put before our passionately loved sovereign, Mrs. Queen Victoria, and her theatrical son, Edwardus, you fulminate your linguistic thunderbolts against my defenceless anatomy and dash your dearly beloved Dan into invisible atoms."

CHAPTER XXVI.

A PAIR OF LETTERS.

“ HIGH STREET,

“ BRITTAS, *August 15th*, 187—.

“ DEAR ARTHUR,—As the hour of our departure is fast approaching, we ardently hope you will soon return from Durrow, and spend with us a day or two at least before you enter college and we bid adieu to our native land for ever. Oh, how sudden and distant the separation. For years our home has been the happiest in Brittas, and father and mother the happiest couple in the whole town. You, dear Arthur, they always regarded as one of their own children, and towards my sister and myself you have ever been a true friend and brother. It was God who sent you to live with us. By your industrious habits and patient resignation you have set us an example which may be of help to us when sorrowful or sick hereafter among strangers. There is, I suppose, a strong element of selfishness in us all. Still, sister and I are

vain enough to think that we are correct in believing there are few young Irishmen more considerate or better hearted than yourself and Joe. But we may be wrong. For—

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

“I sometimes think we have been all too fond of home, and that if we had mixed more among others we might be more broad-minded and generous, and thereby be better fitted for the work God may have in store for us. Poor father and mother are, of course, very sorry, naturally; but they are, on the other hand, supernaturally delighted that God has graciously called all their children to His own immediate service. They will never want for anything. They, as you know, live very abstemiously, and though generosity itself towards others they are satisfied themselves with the humblest fare. The interest of their money will be, no matter how long their lives, more than sufficient for their support. Were it otherwise we would not desert them but would stay with them and, by the work of hand and brain, do our best to make their old age and their death-bed as cheerful and happy as we might. God, however, has decreed

differently, and to His adorable will we obediently submit ourselves, and with childlike confidence consign our fond parents to His paternal care.

“And, now, am I too selfish in writing so much about ourselves? Were I writing to anyone else I would be much more reserved. But to you! You who know us all so intimately! You, whose future is like our own, so indefinite and mysterious! You, who have helped to make our lives so full of innocent enjoyment, and who, in the hour of anxiety or trouble, lightly laughed our griefs away!

“Now, let it be understood that we must have the privilege and pleasure of a long conversation with you before we leave for Belgium. We have made up our minds to say a thousand nice things, the nine-tenths of which we are sure to remember only when we find ourselves located in our convent home beneath foreign skies. Frequently have I heard you speak in terms of gratitude concerning the part my brother took in the cultivation of your taste for Shakespeare. Never have I heard you boast of how you trained me not only to appreciate, but to almost idolise, Mangan, Moore and Davis. For their own intrinsic merits and your sake I love them all. Often of an evening lately appears before my

mental vision the picture so gracefully outlined in the following lines :—

How dear to me the hour when daylight dies,
And sunbeams melt along the silent sea ;
For then sweet dreams of other days arise
And memory breathes the vesper sigh to thee.

And as I watch the line of light that plays
Along the smooth wave towards the burning west,
I long to tread that golden path of rays
And think t'would lead to some bright isle of rest."

" Hoping that our ardent longing for a few prolonged conversations with you before we leave may be gratified.

" I am, in behalf of parents, sister, brother, and on my own account,

" Yours ever gratefully and sincerely,

" NORA LYNCH."

" DURROW, *August 18th, 187—.*

" MY DEAR MISS LYNCH,—In answer to your welcome letter, just received, the first thing I have to tell you is that, *Deo volente*, I shall give yourself and Fanny an opportunity to talk yourselves hoarse in my distinguished company before you shake the dust of Irish earth from your elastic boots. With nothing in your epistle do I find fault. You have all three definitely decided to give your lives to God's

service. In doing so, needless to say, you have my benediction—such as it is. Your parents are, as you remark, well provided for. With joyful hearts, therefore, go forth and execute to the best of your ability Heaven's behest in your regard. Daily is my prospect of being ever ordained becoming fainter. My health is very unsatisfactory. I'm not certain yet about my vocation, and until I have settled that important point not another sovereign will I allow my people to pay for my education. The day after to-morrow you may be on the *qui vive* for my auspicious advent, The visit I wish to be kept a secret from all outside the family circle. After you shall all have had enough of my graceful conversations my intention is to return to my Queen's County friends. What course I may adopt after that, only God knows; I don't. In the meantime, let me implore you to pray devoutly that a ray from heaven may soon dispel the dismal cloud of doubt and darkness in which I find my distracted soul enveloped. With genuine respect and gratitude,

“ I am, yours ever sincerely,

“ ARTHUR HOGAN.”

CHAPTER XXVII.

CONSCIENTIOUS DIFFICULTIES.

ARTHUR HOGAN has redeemed his promise. With affectionate respect and a soft tear rolling down his pale cheeks he has shaken hands for the last time with his faithful friends, Nora Lynch and Fanny. He has said *au revoir* to his Queen's County relatives, and is now, three weeks after the students have returned to college, a discontented and unsettled inmate of his father's home. Irrevocably has he decided never to be the occupant of a room in the Diocesan College. The thought of all the hard work he has gone through and all the sickness endured there during the past four years has lately filled his mind with such a strong repugnance to the place that, anxious as he is to be of as little expense as possible to his parents, he cannot—he will not—enter. One six months within its walls, he feels convinced, would ruin his health for life. So much being decided, what course remains now to be pursued? Remain at home for a year or two and strive to build up his constitution? No. He is more accurately acquainted with his

father's character than, however anxious himself for such a course, to even harbour such a thought, much less give expression to it. Were he to give up now, what would the neighbours say? Tom Hogan was too poor to keep his son in college! Or was it that the silly youngster didn't know his own mind all the time he had been wasting his father's money. In Ireland there is no case more deserving of sympathy and applause than that of the young ecclesiastical student who turns his back on college life, and independently, at the cost of domestic isolation and in the teeth of public ridicule, returns to his secular pursuits, when conscientiously convinced of the absence of a call from Heaven to be a priest. God's blessings ever be with such courageous characters! Arthur, principally because of bad health, could never make up his mind that he would ever be of any use, if ordained, for the onerous responsibilities of the ministry. Occasionally, therefore, does he feel tempted to openly and unreservedly cast aside his sacerdotal aspirations and be of no further annoyance towards his own conscience and of no further expense upon his parents. But these same parents are most anxious that he should proceed. From motives natural as well as supernatural they hope and long and pray that

their son, at any cost, may be a priest. Arthur is influenced by the supernatural only. Were he convinced that he had no divine vocation he would rather occupy a most servile position than proceed one step more along the clerical pathway. Into his room he invites his fond sister, to whom, more unreservedly than ever broken-hearted penitent to confessor, he candidly reveals his conscience.

“Nothing, Mary, but prayer and fasting can help me out of my present difficulty. In your prayers I have more faith than in my own; in mother’s more hope than in yours and mine together. Let us all lay siege to heaven. To our humble supplications I have every confidence that Christ our Saviour will lend an attentive ear. Within the next three days the question must be decided. I can remain in doubt no longer.”

Rosary after Rosary is being recited now late at night by Mrs. Hogan and her two children in Arthur’s room for heavenly council. Uninterruptedly for nearly two hours the multiplied supplications continue. Arthur and his sister can scarcely keep their eyes open. One after the other they fall asleep. But the mother is still as fresh as when she commenced. Decade after decade, and litany after litany, does she

piously recite, and by virtue of her deep devotion and strong faith appears not so much to supplicate as to command heaven to grant her petition. After breakfast the following morning the young student calls into the parlour his two companions of the previous night.

“I am glad to tell you that the fog has almost entirely cleared away. This very morning I shall write to three Missionary Colleges an application for admission. To the one from which the reply first comes I shall start immediately.”

The three applications are posted. On the fourth day Arthur receives the following :—

“ST. KEVIN’S COLLEGE,

“KEVINSTOWN, *September 18th, 187—.*

“DEAR MR. HOGAN,—Though we have lately refused several applications, influenced, however, by the character of your letter, we shall be glad to make room for you. Come at once.

“I am, yours faithfully,

“JOSEPH KEARNEY (*President*).”

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ARTHUR TO HIS SISTER.

“ MARKET STREET, KEVINSTOWN,

“ *September 20th, 187—.*

“ MY DEAR SISTER,—Blocked again ! Like the improvident fool that I am, I have come away without my *character*, and consequently have to remain in lodgings until I receive it from the President of Brittas College and our warm-hearted Father Feehan. The moment I entered St. Kevin’s College I was fortunate in meeting a priest who from the very first took a liking to me. He is a powerfully-built man, with a noble, though determined, countenance, and eyes and forehead the most intellectual looking I have ever seen. He asked me from what part of Ireland I came, and seemed to like me all the more when I told him Father Feehan was P.P., or rather, to be correct, the administrator of my native parish. Years ago they were fellow-students at Maynooth. He enquired minutely about my classical attainments, and when I told him how much I had studied he gave me great encouragement by saying—

“‘You’re all right; I myself may be your examiner.’ But he wasn’t. I was examined by the Vice-President this morning. I sailed with flying colours through Homer, Horace, and Livy, and cut a creditable figure in French and English. I stood for Logic, for which class my examiner said I was well qualified. Just as I was leaving the room he called me back and questioned me about my mathematical knowledge. I had to confess the truth. He gave me the twelfth proposition of the second book of Euclid, which I inextricably mixed up with the thirteenth, and a not very difficult problem in algebra, which I failed to solve. ‘I’m very sorry,’ said he, ‘to find you so backward in mathematics. You must go back to rhetoric, and unless you are able to give, at the end of the year, a satisfactory account of yourself in arithmetic, geometry, and algebra you’ll be obliged to leave the house.’

“Very consoling, wasn’t it? I then and there made up my mind to go back to Brittas, convinced that, having never done anything to forfeit the good will of my former professors, I would be received back with open arms. Having resolved to return I decided to send a telegram to the president asking him if he would receive the prodigal, for I feared that unless I had made

my position secure in either college I might, between the two, come to grief. As I reached the entrance door on my sorrowful way out I met Father Meehan, who previously treated me so kindly. To his question as to how I got through my examination I told him everything ‘And what,’ he enquired, ‘are you going to do now?’ I replied that I had made up my mind to go back to Brittas. Without a moment’s hesitation and in an almost commanding tone he said—

“ ‘Will you accept a friend’s advice?’ How, under the circumstances, could I say no? He then shook my hand very warmly, and in a most friendly voice said, as he started for his room—

“ ‘Stay where you are.’

“I have taken his advice, and ever since I feel so contented. I am staying with a very agreeable family. They keep a kind of general shop in which, on a small scale, they seem to be doing well. The eldest, a girl about eighteen, is very intellectual, and, better still, sensibly devout. She plays the piano splendidly, and sings Moore’s melodies with a pathos and sweetness that makes me almost wish that I may be obliged to remain outside the college walls for another week. Speaking with her to-day at

dinner about poetry, to my shame I had to admit that I had never read Cardinal Newman's famous hymn. It occupies the most prominent place in her album. The first verse I consider superior to the others, probably because it so tellingly describes my own case. Its perusal can do your ladyship no harm.

Lead kindly light amid the encircling gloom,

Lead thou me on!

The night is dark, and I am far away from home,

Lead thou me on!

Keep thou my feet, I do not ask to see

The distant scene—one step enough for me!

“I have just received my satisfactory testimonials from Brittas College, Father Feehan, and from the priest in all the world I most affectionately admire and love, the truly humble, the tender-hearted and intellectually-gifted Dr. Ryan, of Ballingarry. You know how he was beloved by his saintly Archbishop, Dr. Leahy, and how I, until I was fourteen years old, never went to confession to another priest. In the words of the grand old Pius IX. let me conclude—*O felix Hibernia quæ tales tantosque habet pontifices*. Ask my father to translate the line for you.

“I am, yours unchangingly affectionate,

“ARTHUR HOGAN.”

“ ST. KEVIN’S COLLEGE,

“ KEVINSTOWN, *Sept 25th*, 187—.

“ MY DEAR SISTER,—Now that I am settled down in college a few lines from me, I’m sure, will be very acceptable. When the president got my letter he had no vacancy, but soon created one for me. I am one of four located in the same room. The other three hail from Limerick, Kerry, and Cork, respectively. They were anything but delighted with my arrival, for they considered their quarters sufficiently occupied before my advent. Every day they seem to be gradually relenting. Were they only to realise how sensitively I feel their unfeigned, though silent, opposition to my presence they would, I think, be more charitably considerate towards me. But I am determined now to go ahead. I have definitely put my hand to the plough, and rather than turn back I am prepared to die in the furrow. This college seems to be very partial towards mathematical subjects. To my mind, a knowledge of French and a sound scientific training in English and the ancient classics would be more serviceable for a priest on the mission than a thorough familiarity of trigonometry and the complicated systems of Newton, Kepler and Tycho Brahe. During the next twelve months the most of my time

will be sacrificed to lines, points, equations, sards, indices, squares, cubes, surfaces, angles, circles, diagonals, sectors, segments, diameters, parallelograms, and a thousand other scientific eccentricities which, I suppose, will never be of any use to me in after-life. Though I never hope or wish to fall in love with these elements I'm not afraid but I shall be able to so master them at the end of the year as to get my class. For a thorough English education and a sound knowledge of Greek and Latin, there are, I believe, few Irish educational institutions superior to Brittas College. My new professors are exceedingly kind. The students, especially those from my own archdiocese, are very friendly. *Homeliness* seems to be the most conspicuous characteristic of my new surroundings. Never for a moment since I entered have I felt lonely. God grant I may get good health for once in my life.

“ I am, yours as ever,

“ ARTHUR HOGAN.”

CHAPTER XXIX.

FATHER HEALY'S DEATH AND FUNERAL.

THE hills and valleys for miles around Brittas are steeped to-day in sorrow. The funeral notes of the powerful bell of the massive cathedral tower have wafted to many a sympathetic heart the sad news of Father Healy's death. Attacked with erysipelas he would still be at work among his people when he ought be under the care of the nurse and doctor. Compelled at last to surrender, and being told there was no hope, he completely resigned himself to God's will; bore his pain with heroic fortitude, and, after a week's illness, ended a most edifying and useful life by a saintly death.

Not one of the cathedral or college priests but loved him as a brother, nor is there one among them but whose eyes are dimmed with tears to-day beside his coffin. By none were his sterling qualities more highly appreciated than by his own Archbishop. If ever a priest was beloved by his Grace, that priest was Father Healy. He loved him for his zeal, for his humility, for his piety, and probably, most of all,

for the paternal solicitude and affection continuously displayed by Father Healy towards the struggling and poverty-stricken throughout the parish. All the honour and respect in his power does the Archbishop give to the remains of the dear dead priest. A public funeral is ordered. On foot through the partially-muddy streets does the Archbishop march with the pensive multitude in the sad procession. By him are the final absolutions given; and, to crown his respect for the departed, the corpse is reverently laid to rest within the precincts of the grand cathedral. At Ballymore, work throughout the whole district is practically suspended. Every family feels as if one of its own members were dead. Father Healy's charity and zeal are their only subjects of conversation. From the first intimation of his death crowds have been flocking to the chapel to join in the mournful recital of the Rosary. The confession boxes on Saturday are crowded. During the whole day Father Feehan and Father Kiely have had scarcely time to recite the office, and at night, so large the number to be attended to that Dr. O'Donnell cheerfully helps to lessen their labours by transforming for the occasion his comfortable little library into a penitential chamber.

On Sunday, during the delivery of Father Feehan's remarks, there is deep sobbing among the women, and upon many a manly cheek is the tear of heartfelt sorrow visible. Tom Hogan's heart is fit to break. Vividly to him comes back the fond remembrance of the innumerable good turns done him by Father Healy. The many times his faithful friend went security at the bank for him, the practical advice he so often gave him, and their many happy and sensible conversations, all return to emphatically impress on Tom Hogan's mind the irreparable loss he has sustained. As for Mrs. Hogan's beads, there is no danger of its becoming rusty. The children too are all at one with their pious parents, and as far away as St. Kevin's College Father Healy's spiritual needs are not forgotten.

With an appropriate passage from Cardinal Manning's "Eternal Priesthood" let us bring to a close this mournful chapter:—"Lastly, for we must end, comes the death of a fervent priest. The world never knew him or passed him over as a dim light outshone by the priests who court it, but in the sight of God what a contrast. Ever since his ordination or earlier, ever since his second conversion to God, he has examined his conscience day by day, and made

up his account year by year ; he has never failed in his confession week by week, or in his Mass morning by morning, or in his Office punctually and in due season. He has lived as if by the side of his Divine Master, and beginning and ending the day with him he has ordered all the hours and works of the day for His service. He has lived among his people, and their feet have worn the threshold of his door. His day comes at last, and a great sorrow comes upon all homes when it is heard that the father of the flock is dying and the last sacraments have been given to him. And yet, in that dying room, what peace and calm ! He has long cast up his reckoning for himself and for his flock. He has long talked familiarly of death as of a friend who is soon coming. He fears it as an awful transit from this dim world to the great white throne, and as a sinner, an unprofitable servant and a creature of dust, he shrinks, for the Holy Ghost has taught him to know the sanctity of God and the sinfulness of sin. But it is a fear that casts out fear, for it is a pledge that the Holy Ghost, the Lord and life-giver, is in the centre of his soul, casting light upon all that is to be confessed and sorrowed for, and absolving the contrite soul from all bonds of sin and death. None die so happily as priests, surrounded by

their flocks. As they are loved, so are they sustained by the prayers of all whom they have brought to God. Wonderful bond of charity, closer and more vital than kindred, which shall be transfigured in the world of light, and unite pastor and flock to all eternity, when the flock shall all be told and the number be fulfilled, and the Shepherd shall gather round the Great Shepherd of the sheep in the fold upon the everlasting hills."

CHAPTER XXX.

FATHER KIELY'S SPEECH.

OF his Ballymore surroundings Father Kiely is not enamoured. Requested to say a few words at a local Land League Meeting, in no measured terms he emphatically declares that in no other civilized country would such unbridled brutality and despotism be possible. What claim in justice have a few absentee landlords—the heirs of robbery and confiscation—to the property of the Irish nation? Into the schools regularly has he gone, and still intends to go, were it for nothing else than to teach, as best he can, the sad story of Ireland's wrongs to the little children.

“Tell the Irish children, will I, about England's perfidious dealings with Ireland from the dismal day the Norman landed in this country. Tell the children, will I, how 600,000 acres of the very province in which we are living was confiscated by the legal murderess of the unfortunate, but beautiful and chivalrous, Scottish Queen. Tell the children, will I, how in the reign of that worthless monarch, James I., six entire Ulster counties were confiscated.

Think of a country being, with one swoop, deprived of such a large portion of her territory? Why shouldn't these facts be kept before the eyes and dinned into the ears of the rising generation? The children should be told about the deeds of Oliver Cromwell in Ireland. Why should they be ignorant that during his nine months' stay in this country the land was laid waste, the country was made desolate, men, women, and children were slaughtered indiscriminately? Why shouldn't the children be told that in bygone days their persecuted forefathers, when deprived of all their lands, generously received the liberal alternative of 'hell or Connaught'? Cromwell promised quarter to the Drogheda garrison if they would surrender. The promise was kept till the town was taken. As soon as the Puritan butcher attained his object he ordered the wholesale massacre of the defenceless citizens. For five days the streets of Drogheda ran red with blood. Numbers rushed for protection into the large parochial church. The building was set on fire, and those that rushed out escaped the flames only to meet their doom at the bayonet's point. From Drogheda the monster marched to Wexford, where he indiscriminately put to death the unfortunate inhabitants. Three hundred women

fled for refuge to the market cross in the public square. Cromwell respected their faith and reverence by butchering them all as they surged and swayed around the emblem of man's redemption. In addition to these and other deeds of carnage the Puritan monster transported to the Barbadoes eighty thousand Irishmen, of whom, six years later, only ten individuals were alive. Most unpardonably imprudent would it be for me to indicate the purposes for which thousands of innocent Irish girls, as well as vast numbers of the wives of the exiled Irish officers and soldiers, were sent to the fever-stricken plantations of the West Indies. During Oliver's benign protectorate it was enacted that any priest found in Ireland after twenty days was guilty of treason, and liable to be hanged, drawn and quartered. Any person harbouring a priest was liable to the penalty of death; and any person knowing the place of concealment of a priest and not disclosing it to the authorities might be publicly whipped and further punished with amputation of ears. Any person absent from the parish church on a Sunday was liable to a fine. Magistrates might take away the children of Catholics and send them to England to be educated. The same price was set on a priest's skull as upon a wolf's head. And after

all this the low Irish are still ungrateful for the innumerable blessings showered upon them by Cromwell. You all have heard of a certain episode between Father Tom Burke and a Dublin jarvey. As the former was walking down Dame Street he heard the latter upbraiding his horse, and, among other things, calling down on the animal's head 'the curse of Cromwell.' Remonstrating with him, said Father Tom : 'But, my good man, how do you know but Cromwell is in heaven ?' With an indignant and almost irreverent look the man replied : 'Well, your Reverence, if Cromwell be in heaven I don't know what the devil God made hell for ?'

"But Cromwell was not the only British despotic monarch the Irish people have had to deal with. To my mind they were all a bad lot. The pious and immortal Billy Boyne was no exception. During his reign some very picturesque enactments were passed with regard to Ireland. His immediate follower, the abstemious Anne, and all her successors, including our present heartily-cherished queen, were all tarred with the same brush. Listen for a moment to what Dr. Johnson, the great English writer and staunch Protestant, has got to say on the subject : 'The Irish are in a most unnatural state, for we there see the minority

prevailing over the majority. There is no instance, even in the "Ten Persecutions," of such severity as that which the Protestants of Ireland have exercised against the Catholics.'

"In his 'Crime and Disturbance in Ireland' Sir Cornwall Lewis writes: 'Deprived of all self-respect by the operation of the penal statutes, prevented from rising in the world or from bettering their condition by legal disabilities and the legalised oppression of their landlords, without education, excluded from a public participation in the rites of their own religion, they endured all, and more than the evils which belonged to the lot of a serf without looking forward to the interested protection and relief which a master would afford to his bondman.'

"There is probably no more impartial historian than John Richard Green. While I tell you what he has got to say bear with me, for I know you are getting tired of this dry discourse."

"No, no, Father; go ahead."

"My soul, I never doubted you, said Rory of the Hill" (Loud cheers.)

"Well then, John Richard Green says that 'The history of Ireland from its conquest by William III. up to 1815 is one which no Englishman can recall without shame. Since the sur-

render of Limerick every Catholic Irishman—and there were five Catholics to every Protestant—had been treated as a stranger and foreigner in his own country. The House of Lords, the House of Commons, the right of voting for representatives in Parliament, all corporate offices in towns, the magistracy, all ranks in the army, the bench, the bar, the whole administration of government or justice, were closed against Catholics. Few Catholic landowners had been left by the sweeping confiscations which had followed the successive revolts of the island, and oppressive laws forced even these few, with scant exceptions, to profess Protestantism. Necessity, indeed, had brought about a practical toleration of their religion and their worship; but in all social and political matters the native Catholics—in other words, the immense majority of the people of Ireland—were simply hewers of wood and drawers of water to their Protestant masters.’ ”

“ Quite true, Father. Go ahead. We’re not tired.”

“ John Richard Green further states that ‘ the silence of death settled down upon Ireland. For a hundred years the country remained at peace. But the peace was the peace of despair. The Englishman who loves what is noble in

the English temper cannot tell, without sorrow and shame, the story of that time of guilt.'

"A thousand statements similar to these could I quote for you had I time and you patience to listen to me. But what would be the good? Let us, if we can, be, above all things, practical. Let me say that, after so many years away from Ireland, I may be out of touch with your feelings and aspirations. Even so, I am not afraid to speak out my mind to you in the plainest terms. During the twelve or thirteen years I have been away from my native land I have had to deal with and attend to Catholics of almost every nationality. For chastity, generosity, and fidelity I never want to work for better than the Irish and their descendants. I could get the Irish and the Irish-Australian Catholics to do, in reason, almost anything for me. They may be easily led; they will not be bullied, and, from my heart, my blessing on them! There is, I fear, too much bullying going on in Ireland. Why can't our aristocratic gentry, our ecclesiastical superiors, our members of Parliament, our hard-working curates, the shopkeepers, farmers, artisans, and labourers unite in one compact political body, and make the landlords do justice to the tenants, or be unmercifully expelled without compensation

from the country, victimised by their rapacity and dissipation? I may, I confess, be impudently aggressive, but hide-bound conservatism, no matter where found, I cannot help but despise. I have travelled, and for years lived outside your provincial Irish boundaries. Ever dear to me have been justice, liberality, and toleration. Before I left Ireland I was under the impression that the English were the most diabolically objectionable and the most commercially greedy beings in human form upon God's earth. My opinion since has undergone a great change. All the same, let me tell you, that it is only by standing like grim death to your principles that you can ever get John Bull to respect you. Tell him defiantly, to his teeth, to do his best or his worst. The moment you cringe or crawl he'll trample upon you. We Catholics believe in another world. The Englishman, as a rule, confines his adoration to his breeches pocket. Stand together, and if we do our descendants, if not ourselves, will have the satisfaction of seeing our country free, '*ante et inter*,' before and among the world's nationalities. (Applause.)

"These sentiments are, I perceive, very popular. But let me not allow you to live in a fool's paradise. Are we Irish as perfect as we

think we are? I tell you candidly, and I tell you emphatically, that we are not. Frequently are we told from pulpit and platform that we are the grandest, the noblest, and the most virtuous people in the world. With the distinction of your being the most virtuous I am not disposed to quarrel. But if you be the noblest, the most chivalrous, why do you annually supply the British army with so many Irish recruits? If you be the most self-sacrificing, why do you supply so many stalwarts, in the shape of burly policemen, prepared, at so much a day, to throw out on the snow-covered yard or the frozen dung-hill their own flesh and blood? Bad enough is it to be slaves, but the land that gives her strongest to tighten slavery's chain around the limbs of her weaker members is a country deserving only of public execration.

“Again, immoral literature by the ton is being daily imported into Ireland from Great Britain, while the works of Griffin, Davis, Moore, Kickham, and other Irish writers are being neglected. Frequently have you been told that you are a witty, eloquent, and open-hearted people. Rarely has it been impressed upon you that these estimable qualities, divorced from industry and common sense, are but the forerunners of poverty and degradation. It is

deplorable to witness our young men and women fleeing at the rate of forty thousand a year from Ireland. Their places are being gradually filled by foreigners. As regards money, you may or you may not have more to your credit at the end of each successive year in exile than at home. One fact I give, however, as Gospel truth—you need never hope to possess in the stranger's country the same domestic happiness, the same jovial spirits, the same light-hearted mirth that have been yours on your native sod. Besides—and this a consideration not to be despised—there is, to my mind, no country from which your souls will have a better chance of getting into heaven than from a death-bed in fond and ever-faithful Ireland. (Applause.)

“ Let me, in conclusion, quote for you a poem that more than anything I have ever read expresses the feelings of almost every patriotic Irish exile throughout Australia. The verses were written at Ballarat, a city of Victoria, in 1860:—

The sunny south is glowing in the glow of southern glory,
And the southern cross is waving o'er the freest of the
free ;
Yet in vain, in vain, my weary heart would try to hide
the story
That evermore 'tis wandering back, dear native land
to thee ;

The healthy hills of Malazan, the Bann's translucent waters,

Glenleary's shades of hazel, and Angivy's winding streams ;

And Kathleen of the raven locks, the flower of Erin's daughters,

Lost heaven of wildering beauty ; thou art mine at least in dreams.

Oh ! the green land, the old land,

Far dearer than the gold land,

With all its landscape glory and unchanging summer skies,

Let others seek their pleasures,

In the chase of golden treasures,

Be mine a dream of Erin, and the light of Kathleen's eyes.

Sweet scenes may group around me, hill and dale, lagoon and wild wood,

And eyes as bright and cloudless as the azure skies above ;
But strange the face of nature, not the happy haunts of childhood,

And cold the glance of beauty, not the smile of early love ;

Even in the pulse of joy itself, the native charm is wanting,
For distant are the bosoms that would share it as their own ;

Too late to learn that loving hearts will never bear transplanting,

Uprooted once, like seedless flowers, they wither lost and lone.

Oh ! the old land, the green land,

That land of lands the queen land ;

Keep, keep the gorgeous splendours of your sunny southern shore ;

Unfading and undying,

O'er the world between us lying—

The hallowed loves of former days are mine for ever more."

Dear reader, you may imagine I cannot describe the scene and the wild applause that followed.

CHAPTER XXXI.

“ ST. KEVIN’S COLLEGE,

“ *May*, 188—.

“ I CANNOT hope to be able to convey to you the intensity of my gratitude for your kind letter and big cheque for £5 just to hand. It is most consoling to be the possessor of such a friend. Never can I thank you sufficiently, though I know the less I say on this point the better pleased will you be with me. But my heart would give me neither rest nor ease were it not allowed to have its say. My intellect is not much to boast of; but what the spelling-book calls the *seat of life* is all there. Bitterly now and then do I grieve that almost constantly am I the cause of pain, expense, or sorrow to some one. But I can’t help it. You know my people; you know myself—decent, but somewhat circumscribed. In honesty and the faith unchangeable. In hospitality—and hospitality is, I believe, a virtue—exceptional. Though my father is as strict as a Puritan, mother, with all her classical ignorance, invariably has her way. Father wants no little boys, with ‘penny decks’ and brand new buttons and odd pennies, around

the cocks of straw and hay-ricks every Sunday. Mother mildly, but successfully, maintains that their innocent games are within the circumference of strict propriety. Father wants no more dances in the barn. Mother declares 'tis but human nature. Captivity thus leads the captor captive. I agree with mother; but being no partner in the firm I've got to keep my lips tight together. Father never refuses me anything. I ask him only for the bare necessities, for he always imposes a custom duty upon my request by asking me for what object I need the money. Mother and Mary would almost disown me were I to even hint as to how I was about to spend their offerings. Both parties are as good as gold. I am fortunate in my position as *medius terminus*. It takes all kinds to make up the world. Now for myself.

“For the last six or eight months I have been renewing my acquaintance with Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Mars, Neptune, Mercury, and even Uranus, though under conditions different to their mythological characters. By the end of the year I will be supposed to know all about them. Not only that, but I will be also supposed to be able to accurately explain the difference in result when two planes cut each other at right angles and obliquely. I must be

likewise able to explain the appearance of the earth as seen from the sun at the summer solstice ; also at the winter ditto. If ever a priest I would never, I suppose, be able to give absolution to a poor sinner unless I knew all about the vernal equinox. The Polar star and the constellation of the Great Bear are apparently very important factors also. To be ignorant of the moon's motion round the earth, the annular eclipse of the sun, the division of the circle into degrees, Jupiter showing his cloud belts, the great Nebular in Orion, and the unnumbered stars of the Milky Way would, of course, be sufficient justification on the part of the college authorities to declare a candidate unfit for ordination. If I had my way I would, after having creditably matriculated, be for ever done with mathematics. The time between that and entering theology I would give to the study of logic, philosophy, Greek, Latin, and English. I consider it almost sinful to compel students who have no taste for the higher mathematics to uselessly sacrifice their time to unnecessary subjects which they hate. I love Shakespeare, Goldsmith, Addison, Boswell, Newman and Burns, and with all his egotistical flourishes I can more than tolerate Macaulay with all his bigotry. There are twenty-five of us in the

physic class. To about fifteen of that number any draught, short of poison, would be more palatable than the daily astronomical and trigonometrical dose. We would, I suppose, be worthless priests if we weren't able to draw a tangent to a conic from an external point. We would never be able to celebrate Mass if we weren't able to prove that the position of any tangent to a hyperbola intercepted between the asymptotes is bisected at its point of contact. To tell you the plain truth, I am disgusted with such a system. Oughtn't something be done by way of compromise and discrimination? If the minority have a relish for the parallax of the moon and the laws of Kepler let them by all means be allowed to follow for the twelve months their mathematical proclivities. If the majority would be more profitably engaged and more at home with ancient and modern literature, why shouldn't their tastes also be consulted? There are some of us who when we enter the theology class will, I fear, be but poorly able to express ourselves in Latin, or even decent English. But, then, our literary ignorance will be more than adequately compensated for by our comprehensive knowledge of the 'man in the moon.'

"Passing away obliquely from the present time, but not from myself, I deem it my duty

to let you know that the San Francisco Mission has abruptly closed its gates against me. During the week word has come from the Archbishop that he wants only eight from this college. I'm ninth on the list, and have to shift. On receipt of the depressing news I consulted the doctor, who is a very reliable friend of mine. After serious thought he said: 'It may be all for the better. What you need is a hot, dry climate. I advise you to select some Australian inland diocese. I'll use my influence with the president on your behalf.' To cut a long story short, I'm booked for Australia. I am given four weeks to make the selection. There are several Australian Missions, including Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney, open here. You are the only one I intend to consult in this important matter. My parents and friends are quite indifferent as to where I go.

“With feelings of affectionate regard,

“I am, yours gratefully,

“ARTHUR HOGAN.”

CHAPTER XXXII.

“BALLYMORE, *May*, 188—.

“MY DEAR ARTHUR,—As I sit down to answer your letter I realise that I have a conscientious duty to perform. There is no more delicately responsible office than that of the priesthood, and to even select a mission for a clerical candidate is a matter of no small importance. The fact, however, that you have decided to begin and end your missionary career in Australia makes my task comparatively easy. I am glad that you have given up all claim to the archdiocese. This half-and-half business is a great mistake. Life in Ireland is so different from what it is in America and the British Colonies. In these countries there is so much freedom, so much independence from a priest's point of view, that it is very difficult to afterwards become reconciled with the ubiquitous servility of our poor down-trodden peasantry. Our home people have a very inaccurate idea of Australia. To begin, that island continent contains an area of nearly 3,000,000 square miles, with about an equal number of inhabitants. Notwithstanding this sparse population the country

is fairly enlightened and progressive, and the character of the education in the public and Catholic schools is, all things considered, of a high standard. Australia is, as you know, divided into five Colonies, each having its own parliament and governor. How unlike unfortunate Ireland! I am pleased to hear there are so many Australian dioceses open to your college, though I would be opposed to your selecting any of the three mentioned in your letter. For one threatened with consumption, as you seem to be, the best colony would be, perhaps, Queensland, only that it would take you or any other priest with the constitution of a Samson or a Hercules to efficiently work the extensive parishes in that hot quarter of the world. Should you have any reason for liking to settle down in Victoria I would recommend Sandhurst or Ballarat, the former for preference. Should Providence direct your course towards New South Wales, I advise you to select Goulburn, which includes the vast Riverina, a district for consumptives, asthmatical and weak-chested patients, probably the healthiest in the world. Failing to get adopted for Goulburn, select Bathurst. The doctor is perfectly right. You must keep away as far as you can from the sea. "I am not disposed to quarrel with your

remarks about the advisability of more attention being given to literature, especially Latin and English, in our Irish colleges. When reading our Office it is tantalising to be obliged to pass over a sentence here and there without being able to take in the full meaning as we go along, principally because of the slipshod way we were allowed to wade through our classical courses. It is, of course, well for a priest to be versed in as many subjects as possible. But the necessary ones ought to come first, then the useful, and last the—to some students at least—detestedly unintelligible. With the leader of my class I could always keep abreast in all the mathematical subjects, but I have often since doubted if the knowledge obtained at the expense of so much thought and time has been of proportionate missionary value to me.

“The political outlook is as black as it can be. The leaders are being drafted to Kilmainham. The people are being thrown out as unmercifully as if they were plague-infested animals, and the whole country seems paralysed with her ghastly prospect of poverty and despair.

“May God help and save poor Ireland is the fervently sad aspiration of

“Yours ever reliably,

“JOHN KIELY.”

CHAPTER XXXIII.

“ ST. KEVIN’S, *June*, 188—.

“ MY DEAR SISTER,—After my devotions nothing gives me more consolation than writing in a free, off-hand, affectionate manner my thoughts, such as they are, to you. Hardly ever do I sit down for that purpose but Bobbie Burns’ epistle to a young friend comes before me.

I lang hae thought, my youthful friend,
A something to have sent you,
Though it should serve na other end
Than just a kind memento.
But how the subject theme may gang,
Let time and chance determine;
Perhaps it may turn out a sang,
Perhaps turn out a sermon.

“ But I assure you from the start you need not be afraid of either, for at this moment I am in anything but a lyrical mood, and being still a stranger to theology, my first attempt at sermonising I emphatically relegate to the contingencies of the future. For several reasons I find it much easier to write to you than to anybody else. First of all, because no other person, not even my mother herself, understands me as well as you do. Nor is there on earth another

being more unselfishly anxious about my future, more disposed to help and encourage me in my difficulties, or more inclined than you, Mary, are to not only minimise, but to even altogether charitably overlook, my many faults and imperfections. This is one of the many motives which urge me to express my gratitude so frequently, and which, on this occasion, induce and entitle me to tell you, the longer we are apart the more ardently do I long for the moment when I shall clasp your faithful hand again in mine. But that moment cannot be as soon as we expected. Lately I have been in great trepidation over the half-yearly examinations. This fear and the severe exertions I have made to get through them satisfactorily have, I believe, been, to some extent at least, accountable for my present illness. There are certain subjects, the higher mathematics in particular, that I have never been able to study with a whole heart and an undivided mind. I patiently concealed and endured the attack as long as I could, but at the sight of a small quantity of blood from my lungs I was ordered to the College hospital, where I have been most comfortably domiciled for the past five or six days. This very day my classmates are being examined. How I sympathise with those among them who, like myself, have

a much greater love for Demosthenes and Plato, Cicero and Virgil, Shakespeare and Addison, than for all the astronomers and scientists that ever lived. Though you can hardly credit me, it is a fact that, notwithstanding my temporary sufferings, I feel heartily grateful to heaven for my breakdown. Manfully can I bear this. But a collapse before the whole college staff and my fellow-students would be, for the time being, a greater trial, and possibly, even as regards my health, more injurious. Don't you, therefore, fret about me. The doctor is thoroughly satisfied with my progress. The president and dean visit me regularly. Soups, fat chickens, rich new milk (not like the attenuated milk occasionally mixed with the cocoa), fresh butter, and all kinds of fruit, with other luxuries, are mine *galore*. My room is fit for a prince, not to talk of an evicted tenant's son; and, to crown all, I have in attendance on my serene highness an exceedingly cheerful, very painstaking and, name it not at Raheen, a prettily-dressed nurse, I thank you. Were it only to escape the examinations and discover what kindnesses one, who doesn't expect too much, may receive from even strangers it would more than repay a body to get ill occasionally. As I cannot be at home on Sunday to express myself *viva voce* I must be allowed full

scope to express myself just as I like *in scriptis*. Here are a few lines from an English poet which have just struck me right in the forehead :—

Nor love, nor honour, wealth nor power
Can give the heart a cheerful hour
When health is lost. Be timely wise,
With health all taste of pleasure flies.

“ Gay. A Scottie this time :—

Ah, what avail the largest gifts of heaven
When drooping health and spirits go amiss ?
How tasteless then, whatever can be given !
Health is the vital principle of bliss.

—THOMSON.

“ How different all this from the teaching of the Imitation. It is good for us sometimes to have troubles and adversities, for they make a man enter into himself that he may know that he is in a state of banishment, and may not place his hopes in anything in this world. It is good that we sometimes suffer contradictions. These things are helps to humility and defend us from vain glory. ‘ Christ was to suffer and rise again from the dead.’ Oh, what a heavenly blessing the true faith is ! For my own part, though never strong or healthy, I have always had more than the ordinary share of happiness. *What the eye never sees the heart never longs for*

“ It has abruptly occurred to me that I have broken my resolution, so in the absence of a more deserving topic I must gravitate again to my worthy self. Sometimes I imagine I may live a few years more, or even become an old man ; and with that thought before me, having made up my mind to be ordained, I hope to be a good priest. To attain that end I require, besides my own efforts, God’s vocation and assistance, the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, the influence of my guardian angel, and the devout prayers of all who wish me well. And now let me say that I am sorry you sent me any money to pay my way home. Instead of being in need I will be able to give you a decent slice of ‘ the root of all evil ’ when we meet, and not only to you, but also to Kathleen and all my brothers. The noble benefactor’s name must be consigned to oblivion till your stately and graceful ladyship shall have the supreme gratification of feasting your lovely blue eyes on the aristocratically outlined features of your distinguished brother.

“ ARTHUR HOGAN.”

“ P.S.—All the students will have left by Saturday evening. The doctor says I will be strong enough to go away Tuesday. Best love to father, mother, and all at home.—A. H.”

CHAPTER XXXIV.

PARNELL'S GREAT SPEECH.

It would be difficult for an outsider to understand the joy that pervades an Irish college when a free day is announced. The dead silence is broken by cheer after cheer from all parts of the building, the text-books are recklessly thrown aside, the rooms and class-halls are deserted, the ball-courts are rushed, the cricketers are ready for action, and, with the exception of an odd group here and there, the students are nearly all engaged in some kind of sport or athletic exercises. On this occasion, however, a free day at St. Kevin's, a very large number have deserted the park for the theology hall, for the news has gone abroad that a copy of the *Dublin Freeman* containing Parnell's celebrated speech at Wexford has been surreptitiously introduced. Needless to say that Arthur Hogan is one of the most enthusiastic among them. He is unanimously elected to mount the rostrum and read the speech for his fellow-students. This he does with a vigour, a determination and patriotic fire that would delight Parnell himself were he present.

“You have gained something during the last twelve months by your exertions,” commences Arthur; “but I am here to-day to tell you that you have gained but a fraction of that to which you are entitled. And the Irishman who thinks he can now throw away his arms, just as Grattan disbanded the volunteers in 1783, will find to his sorrow that he has placed himself in the power of the perfidious, and cruel, and relentless English enemy. (Great cheering.) In the opinion of an English statesman no man is good in Ireland until he is dead and buried, and unable to strike a blow for Ireland. Perhaps the day may come when I may get a good word from English statesmen as being a moderate man after I am dead and buried. When people talk of ‘public plunder’ they should ask themselves who were the first plunderers in Ireland. The land of Ireland has been confiscated three times over by the men whose descendants Mr. Gladstone is supplying in the enjoyment of the fruits of their plunder by his bayonets and his buckshot. And when we are spoken to about plunder we are entitled to ask who were the first and biggest plunderers. This doctrine of public plunder is only a question of degree.

“In one last despairing wail Mr. Gladstone

says: 'And the Government is expected to preserve peace with no moral force behind it.' The Government have no moral force behind them in Ireland. The whole Irish people are against them. They have to depend for their support upon a self-interested and a very small minority of the people of this country, and therefore they have no moral force behind them; and Mr. Gladstone in those few short words admits that English Government has failed in Ireland.

"He admits the contention that Grattan and the Volunteers of 1782 fought for; he admits the contention that the men of '98 died for; he admits the contention that O'Connell argued for; he admits the contention that the '98 men staked their lives for; he admits the contention that the men of '67, after a long period of depression and apparent death of national life in Ireland, cheerfully faced the dungeons and horrors of penal servitude for; and he admits the contention that to-day you, in your over-powering multitudes, have established and, please God, will bring to a successful issue—namely, that England's mission in Ireland has been a failure, and that Irishmen have established their right to govern Ireland by laws made by themselves on Irish soil. I say it is not in Mr. Gladstone's power to trample on the aspirations and rights

of the Irish nation, with no moral force behind him. These are very brave words that he uses, but it strikes me that they have the ring about them like the whistle of a schoolboy on his way through a churchyard at night to keep up his courage. He would have you believe that he is not afraid of you because he has disarmed you, because he has attempted to disorganise you, because he knows that the Irish nation to-day are disarmed as far as physical weapons are concerned. But he does not hold this kind of language with the Boers. He said that he was going to put them down, and as soon as he had discovered that they were able to shoot straighter than his own soldiers he allowed these few men to put him and his Government down. I trust, as the result of this great movement, we shall see that just as Gladstone, by the Act of 1881, has eaten all his own words, has departed from all his formerly declared principles, now we shall see that these brave words of the English Prime Minister will be scattered like chaff before the united and advancing determination of the Irish people to regain for themselves their lost land and their legislative independence."

During the reading of this remarkable speech the enthusiastic applause of the students punctuated almost every sentence. They made

no mistake in their selection. From the first word to the last Arthur didn't miss a single point. He is proud of the compliment that has been paid him, though, being of a retiring nature, he would have been better pleased if the honour had been conferred on some of the senior students.

CHAPTER XXXV

A REMARKABLE POEM.

THERE is probably at the present time no more miserable country within the bounds of civilisation than afflicted, all but hopelessly despairing, Ireland. Her leaders, including her uncrowned king, are coldly located in Her Majesty's dungeons. Her poor children are hungry and famished. For the last two or three years the condition of the farmers has been going from bad to worse. In a good many districts the potato crop has been a failure ; barley, and oats, and cattle are bringing smaller prices than in previous years, and so gloomy appears the country that, in the writer's judgment, there is only one poem in the Saxon tongue, but written by an Irishman, that can adequately express the sad surroundings. To give an extract here and there from it would be unjust to its patriotic author, therefore we give the poem in full :—

OREMUS.

Years and years my eyes have waited for the coming of
the glory,
That would make amends for tortures, pillaged lands,
and roofs aflame,
But the years have brought no comfort—they have added
to our story
Only blurred and blotted pages darkened with our grief
and shame.

We were patient, God! we think it, in the time of
tribulation,
Though our hearts had fire within them that the devils
understand,
And our vengeance vainly sued us, though we heard the
lamentation
Of our starving sons and daughters made a laughter in
the land.

Now and then the great desiring for revenge upon our masters
Took our hands and hearts in triumph, turning them to
devil's tools,
Well, we know 'twas wrong, and failings and unpitying
disasters
Speak to us the mind of heaven : we admit it ! we are fools.

It was better when we flung us, in our depth of desolation,
On the earth that minded never, under heaven that
did not mind ;
Saying, God ! we take in patience this Thy bitter dis-
pensation,
We will please Thee with our weeping, we the beggar-
men and blind.

Best it was when insult found us, and we hailed it as a
blessing,
Taking spit and scoff for mercies, holding hunger for
a friend;
Stretching forth our cheeks for smiting, and our mouths
for blows confessing
'Twas the way ordained for Ireland's purifying to the
end.

Even so we kept as patient, in the mud and mire awaiting,
What new modes of good might meet us on the doleful
way we trod.
We have known the filth of kennels, we have known the
prison grating
In the land that nature gave us, fruit and floweret,
rock and sod.

We were laughed at by the nations, but we heeded not
the laughter,
For we knew the greater soul can see and bear it with
a smile,
And the shame within the present drew from out the large
hereafter
A glory and a gladsomeness that lasted for a while.

For a while—for back upon us come the curses of the ages,
Come the curses of our fathers from their isolated graves;
Come the curses of our children, whose disgrace will be
the wages
Of our shaming sin that hands to them the heritage of
slaves.

And our hearts, O God ! are human, and are hot besides
and boiling ;

And our souls are black and bitter, for our backs are
galled and sore,

And the thought springs up within us that to suffer our
despoiling

Is unworthy, is unrighteous, and is sin for evermore.

O, dear Lord ! Look down upon us ! On the men who
ne'er denied Thee

When Thy name was made a mock'ry by the men that
mock us now ;

On the men who rang Thy praises when our masters still
descried Thee,

And the only crown vouchsafed us was the thorn upon
the brow.

Angel warriors are about Thee, and their swords are ever
sleeping,

Spare us one to strike for Ireland as they struck for
Israel ;

One to show the doubting nations that our land is in Thy
keeping,

And the rightful cause shall triumph o'er the fraud and
force of hell.

One more chance for dear old Ireland ; one more chance
Thou wilt not grudge her ;

One to place her flag the foremost in the onward march
of men ;

One more chance, and let Thine angels, let the whole world
stand to judge us

If we make not saints and scholars for the universe again.

See us here, a nation praying, at Thy feet, Oh! God,
prostrated,

Clinging madly to our Maker, with despairing dying call,
Robbed and slandered by our brethren, hunted evermore
and hated,

Not one friend in all our anguish, but the God that
knows it all.

Lord, we never yet have doubted of the great right hand
that's o'er us—

Of the heart that ever watches o'er the miseries of men;
Now we're weak and sad and weary, and the way is dim
before us,

And—*Oremus*—Lord! we pray Thee, be Thou merciful.—
Amen.

God be with thee, Fion Barra.

And now, dear reader, are you tired of poetry?
If so, go your way, for you are neither the man
nor woman, boy or girl I want to walk with any
longer.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ARTHUR'S FIRST SERMON.

“ ST. KEVIN'S, 188—.

“ MY DEAR SISTER,—Though it seems only like yesterday since I entered this homely college, in which I have always been well treated, I have nearly completed my first theological year, and preached last Sunday, without breaking down, my first sermon before the dean and all the students, from the first to be ordained to the last recruit. Nobody expects conversions on these occasions. The audience conscientiously lays aside its devotion for the time being. The poor trembling preacher struggles through the academical exercise as best he can; comes down from the pulpit with hopping nerves and an agitated heart; sits down as steadily as he can after the excitement, and listens, in a dazed kind of way, to the criticism of the two students called upon to give their opinion of the performance. The two nominated—a burly ‘Durry Mon,’ the other from fighting Wexford—unanimously agreed that your weak, sickly brother’s effort was all that could be expected;

more than that, there seemed to be an under-current of reservation to the effect that, if necessary, they would be prepared to measure their rhetorical swords with any man, be his position what it might, that would have the hardihood to find fault with their verdict. But, thanks be to goodness, the poor fellows got no chance. The dean summed up most favourably, and let me down as lightly, all things considered, as he could. Often and often do I think that the reason why I am so considerately treated here, so affectionately treated at home, so hospitably treated by all the big-hearted neighbours during the holidays, is that I am one uninterrupted vein of sickness. You would be one of the proudest girls in Ireland if you could only witness, for even one day, the character of the treatment I daily receive in this place. Were you to see how the old nurse, with, of course, her two eyes defiantly closed against all pecuniary remuneration, mixes the mustard plasters with hot water and her crocodile tears, you would cheerfully chant the *Nunc Dimittis*, and die happy. But an hour later were you to take the place at the foot of my bed, and see the form of the saintly doctor take my lean wrist between his sympathetic fingers, down instinctively on your bare knees would you go and thank heaven

that there is balm still in Gilead. Furthermore, had you the privilege of knowing how nobly I have been treated by our worthy dean, you would be disposed to exclaim, for your affectionate brother's sake, that your cup of joy was filled to overflowing. Not so fast, however, two more remain. God reserve a high place in His eternal kingdom for our exceptionally gifted president, whose letter brought me to this happy home; and, though last mentioned, for big-hearted and toweringly high above all others, Father Meehan, to whom educationally I am more indebted than to any other professor under whom I have ever studied. So there you are. With this preface I send you my last Sunday's sermon; keep it safe, and pray for me while yet among my Irish friends, and, Oh! Mary, most of all when far away from them and you and Ireland:—

“ ‘I say to you that even so there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance.’—St. Luke, chapter xv., verse 7.

“ ‘During the three years of our Lord's public mission there was nothing for which He was more remarkable than for His compassionate mercy towards repentant sinners. At one time He compares Himself to a shepherd. “I am

the good Shepherd. I know mine and mine know Me. Other sheep I have that are not of this fold. Them also I must bring, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd. I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly." From the day He began to publicly preach His Gospel either directly or indirectly was He employed in bringing back the lost sheep to the fold. And though many heard and hearkened to His voice, His divine heart was ever sighing for the return of the thousands still who had gone astray. Day after day, and night after night, was He passionately yearning for their return. But, alas! many of them, for the wild enjoyment of their freedom, the quiet security of the peaceful fold abandoned, and their good and loving Shepherd, for the unbridled licence of their passions that but lead them to destruction, they deserted. Outside the fold that was so well guarded, out through the rough ways of the trackless mountain, out on the barren plains of the scorching desert, out among the wild scenes of the stranger's land, with no ray of hope, they died in anguish. To the last moment of their existence was the Shepherd's voice as strong as ever for their conversion. And when they heart-broken died of spiritual thirst and hunger, having become a

prey to their sinful passions, then, and then only, was it that the Shepherd ceased to exert His influence to bring them back or gave them up as lost for ever.

“ ‘ And now, after eighteen hundred years, this is how matters stand to-day. The Shepherd who watched over the flock at that distant date is He who is watching over the interests of the flock to-day. Jesus Christ was the Shepherd then. Jesus Christ is the Shepherd now. At that far away period His sacred heart was overflowing for His sheep. To-day it is equally compassionate. The same rich pastures opened wide to them are at present opened wide to all those content still to remain within the fold. On the night before that on which He suffered death the Blessed Eucharist did He most lovingly institute, and with his venerable hands did He give His body and blood to His twelve disciples. This same divine bread has He graciously left to be the food of our souls to the end of time. Once upon Calvary’s cross did the eternal Shepherd offer up His life for the entire world. Daily upon thousands of altars is that same death mystically renewed and its merits applied to the souls of men. Time has in no way diminished the Shepherd’s love and compassion for His sheep. He is still, as He was from the

beginning, "the door of the sheepfold." By Him if any man enter he shall be saved. He shall go in and out and shall find pasture. When at last His love for His sheep could go no further upon the hard bed of the cross, for their sake did He cheerfully lay down His life ; and to-day, though no longer visible in His humanity, not less strong or consoling is that softly paternal voice of His coming down from the eternal hills, and speaking in accents full of mercy and forgiveness—"Come to Me all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you." Happy, indeed, the souls that shall correspond with the grace of this heavenly invitation. Their wounds, however deep or many, shall be mercifully healed, and, as a reward of their final perseverance, joyfully will they be welcomed by the Great Shepherd into His Father's Kingdom to be, with others like themselves, crowned with honour for endless ages.

" ' Again, in the parable of the prodigal son, our Lord has exemplified the intensity of His mercy towards the sincerely repentant sinner. You are all intimately acquainted with the pathetic story. A certain father has two sons ; the younger demands the portion of the substance falling to his share. Having obtained it, he sets out for a far off country, where he spends

his money in dissipation with low companions. Soon he begins to be in want. He has squandered all his substance ; he has no friend ; and to such a state of degradation has he brought himself that, rather than die of hunger, he has set out to eat the husks which the swine he is now herding feed on. Oh, what a change from his father's house ! No longer upon his emaciated cheeks the glow that once they bore of innocence and health ! Sadness sits upon his brow. His conscience is seething with remorse, and like unto heart-broken Samson might he say—

“ ‘ Hence with leave

Retiring from the popular noise, I seek
This unfrequented place to find some ease ;
Ease to the body some, none to the mind
From restless thoughts, that, like a deadly swain
Of hornets armed, no sooner found alone,
But rush upon me thronging, and present,
Times past, what once I was, and what am now.

“ ‘ And, returning to himself, he exclaims—
“ How many hired servants in my father's house abound with bread, and I here perish with hunger ? I will arise, and will go back to my father, and say to him—‘ Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee ; I am not now worthy to be called thy son. Make me as one of thy hired servants.’ ” Having definitely deter-

mined to carry out this salutary resolution, immediately does he set out from this distant country for his father's happy home. The many a long mile, and the thirsty plains and craggy mountain, and the dangerous precipice are bravely faced and conquered. The hardships and dangers of the journey are all consumed by the thought of the anticipated welcome, and in the father's love for his child the prodigal son is not disappointed. Upon the hillside, long before the repentant son comes in sight, is the father watching for his return. Too anxiously impatient has he been at home to await there the oft prayed for arrival. And as soon as the object of his affectionate solicitude appears, with all his speed does the fond father run to meet him. The paternal arms are fondly thrown around his child's neck, heart is lovingly pressed to heart, and of many a tender kiss of love unutterable are the withered features of the poor profligate the glad recipient. And the father says to the servant—"Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him, and put a ring upon his hand, and shoes upon his feet. And bring hither the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry: Because this my son was dead and is come to life again: was lost and is found." Now, the elder brother was angry at all this, and

refused to be present at the feast. “Behold for so many years do I serve thee, and I have never transgressed thy commandment, and yet thou hast never given me a kid to make merry with my friends.” But the father saith to him—“Son, thou art always with me, and all I have is thine. But it was fit that we should make merry and be glad, for this thy brother was dead and is come to life again; he was lost and is found.”

““And yet, touching though this parable, it is only the merest shadow of what takes place between God and the repentant sinner. The far off country represents the sinner’s life. For the meretricious pleasures there, the soul abandons the path of virtue. With reluctance God parts company with His rebellious child. But the child is of age, and refuses submission any longer to God’s commands. He is sick of the obligations imposed upon him. He is tired of the same unchangeable course of duty from week to week, and from year to year. Why should he be compelled to hear Mass every Sunday, abstain from meat on Fridays, and have to confess his sins at least once a year? The portion of his substance, the power to abuse his liberty, he requests, and from his Eternal Father most unwillingly receives. With bounding heart

he bids adieu to home and friends. He revels in the thought of being at last his own master. He mingles in the gay, fashionable, and sinful circles of society. The grace of God he quickly loses. The domestic pleasures are exchanged for the midnight revel. Would you find him now, he must be sought for where the drunkard's blasphemies are most excessive or the libertine's laughter most revolting. His time for the most part is spent in the haunts of vice. From the innocence of youth, the enjoyment of health, and the happiness of peace has he been long divorced. He has no friend to give him a good advice in the sinner's land. As long as he had money and good cheer and a flippant tongue to gratify their evil inclinations a most welcome companion was he among them. Now that he has fallen into the sere and yellow leaf they have nothing better for him than the husks of swine. And, smitten with remorse, like the poor prodigal, he enters into himself and compares his present with his past surroundings. He is sick at last with the drunkard's dregs and the harlot's shame. For his troubled soul in that licentious land he can find no repose. But why die in disgrace and despair? Is there not a welcome in readiness for him yet in his native land? Will not the father who so reluctantly allowed him to leave

receive him back with open arms? Ah, yes, he will! Influenced by this inspiration he cries out—"I will arise and will go back to my father, and say to him: Father I have sinned against heaven and before thee; I am not now worthy to be called thy son. Make me as one of thy hired servants." But not as a servant, but as a child, is he received. His past ingratitude is forgotten in the presence of his deep repentance. The fatted calf is killed, and the feast prepared in honour of the great occasion. Reverently by Christ's representative in the sacred tribunal is he clothed with the snow-white robe of his baptismal innocence. No longer is he the slave of Satan, but an heir of heaven, and after his prolonged thirst and fasting he at length receives, as the strong pledge of his Redeemer's love, the adorable Eucharist as a shield and support against all future temptations to the end of life. Such is the treatment each poor returning prodigal is ever sure to receive from the ever merciful hands of his Eternal Father.

"But these are not the only examples we have of God's mercy towards the child of sin and contrition. Who that has ever heard of the life and conversion of Magdalen would be disposed, however great his crimes, to give way

to despair? It would not be easy to picture to oneself a more abandoned life than hers was. By nature formed, and adorned by art to captivate and deceive, her personal charms were the cause of sin to myriad souls. To-day by her pretended affection they were flattered and deceived. To-morrow, to make place for fresh favourites, they were cast aside. But at length the captivator was made captive. The fame of Christ's miracles have reached her ears. Once before this she may have gazed upon His face and listened with awe to his words of wisdom. She has been told that He is to dine to-day at Simon the leper's, and resolves to go there to see Him. God's grace and God's mercy are at work. The moment she looks upon His divine countenance her eyes fill with tears, and her heart, long steeped in crime, is almost rent asunder with repentance. Forgetful of her company and surroundings, she rushes forward, throws herself at the feet of Jesus, washes them with a copious flood of truly contrite tears, and with overpowering feelings of affection humbly dries them with her hair. Too long has she been spending her time with lovers she only desired to flatter, and with whose attentions her sinful heart could never be content. But one at last she has found for whom she has

given up all others, and to whom till death she is resolved to cling.

“ ‘ And behold a woman that was in the city, a sinner, when she knew that He sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, bought an alabaster box of ointment, and standing behind at His feet she began to wash them with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment. And turning to the woman He said unto Simon : “ Dost thou see this woman ? I entered into thy house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet ; but she with tears hath washed My feet, and with her hairs hath wiped them. Thou gavest Me no kiss ; but she, since she came in hath not ceased to kiss My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint ; but she with ointment hath anointed My feet. Wherefore I say to thee : ‘ Many sins are forgiven her because she hath loved much ; but to whom less is forgiven he loveth less.’ ” And he said to her : “ Thy sins are forgiven thee.” And they that sat at meat with Him began to say within themselves : “ Who is this that forgiveth sins also.” And He said to the woman : “ Thy faith hath made thee safe ; go in peace.”

“ ‘ At another time the Scribes and Pharisees bring to Him a woman guilty of adultery, and

say to Him: "Now, Moses in the law commanded us to stone such a one. But what sayest Thou?" And this they said tempting Him that they might accuse Him. But Jesus, bowing Himself down, wrote with His finger upon the ground. When, therefore, they continued asking Him, He lifted up Himself and said to them: "He that is without sin among you let him first cast a stone at her." And again stooping down, He wrote on the ground. But they hearing this went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, and Jesus alone remained, and the woman standing in the midst. Then Jesus lifting up Himself said to her: "Woman, where are they that accused thee? Hath no man condemned thee?" Who said: "No man, Lord." And Jesus said: "Neither will I condemn thee. Go, and now sin no more."

"And now, in conclusion, with all these numberless other examples of God's mercy before him, how, let me ask, can any sinner, how dreadful soever or numerous his sins, despair of pardon? How can he persuade himself that the Shepherd who went to such trouble in bringing back the lost sheep, the father who welcomed with such delight the prodigal's return, the Redeemer who unreservedly forgave the penitent Magdalen and the woman accused of

adultery, will for a moment hesitate to receive each and every repentant sinner with open arms on whatsoever day the sinner determinedly makes up his mind to be converted? No sin is too grievous to be forgiven; no life so abandoned but may be changed; and no man, however bad the past, but can, with God's grace, make amends for all. There is a time for work, and a period for each when time and work shall be no more. During life God's mercy never tires: God's pardon never refused to those who ask it as they ought. "As I live, saith the Lord, I will not the death of the sinner, but rather that he be converted and live. I have come to cast fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be enkindled." Yes, the heart of Christ is as merciful to-day as it was when, during His public mission, He raised the dead from their silent graves and cured all manner of diseases among the people. He is still solicitous for the safety of the lost sheep. It is hard, after all He has done to make us happy, to see us ungratefully turn our back upon that home where all He has is ours. It is hard to behold us casting aside the bread of life for the husks of swine, coldly ignoring His invitation to the wedding feast, and dying at last a deplorable death in the stranger's land. Day and

night to us are His sweet invitations issued. To our wounded souls is He ever ready to apply the healing balm of mercy and forgiveness. Behold how He stands as it were on the mountain tops, calling out in accents full of love to the poor prodigal to return ; and cold indeed that sinner's heart must be, and terrible for him the approaching judgment, who turns a deaf ear to that voice of mercy, bringing as it does to his soul and conscience peace and consolation here on earth, and the assurance and pledge of a happy home with God Himself and with the angels and saints for endless ages in the world beyond the grave.' "

CHAPTER XXXVII.

DAN'S MARRIAGE.

It is an ill breeze that blows good to no one, and the gale that has wafted Judy Mallon to the workhouse has triumphantly borne Dan Cleary into possession of the five acres of rich land and the spacious cottage lately occupied by the poor invalided widow.

For the last three or four weeks Dan has spared no expense in making the house worthy of himself and his future wife. We may mention that as soon as Judy Mallon became a cripple she put the sale of the little estate into Tom Hogan's hands, and needless to tell you, that Tom sold the property for the highest penny to a good mark. The amount realised by the sale Mr. Hogan hands over to the Sisters of Mercy in charge of the Brittas workhouse, where good-natured Judy Mallon is destined to spend the remainder of her life. And just at this stage of our humble story, we would be very much inclined to moralise only that, fortunately or unfortunately, moralising is not in our line. Even so, why shouldn't we be at

liberty to give a mild hint as to what we mean ? Long before ever I saw a nun I formed a very high opinion of nuns, chiefly because of the tributes paid them by Gerald Griffin and by Richard Dalton Williams. Now, after toilsome years of incessant labour, let me say that, after the friendship of my brother priests there has been during my missionary career nothing for which I feel more grateful than for the work done by the Sisters of Mercy, who have so satisfactorily looked after the schools under my charge for the past ten or twelve years. Sometimes I imagine that we Catholics, including the clergy, aren't sufficiently thoughtful and kind towards those working under our jurisdiction for the great common cause. And sometimes I even imagine that our Catholic books would be much more numerous were we to care less as to what our critics might think or write about us. Why should we be afraid to openly preach the truth ? Why afraid to state in season and out of season that there is only one Lord, one God, one baptism, and only one true church ? Christ never spoke about His churches—only about His *Church*. *That* he solidly built upon a rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a

rock. This I pen in no uncharitable spirit to our separated friends, but in simple justice to the cause of truth and man's salvation. "But let that pass at present, lest we should forget we digressed."

We are now standing in Ballymore Church. You see before you the lovely sanctuary, with its expensive carpeting and marble altar with costly candlesticks, beautiful vases and snow-white coverings. Everything within and without the building is a credit to the taste and generosity of its pastor and people. Itinerant Protestants tell us it is wrong to have such expensive and so richly decorated ecclesiastical edifices in the midst of such glaring poverty. But who erected the churches? Who created the poverty? Who built St. Patrick's Cathedral and Christ's Church, Dublin? Whose property are they now?

With as much ease and grace as if they had frequently gone through the ceremony the bride and bridegroom take their places at the altar rails. Distinctly they pledge their fidelity to each other. The Rubicon is crossed, and they both look the picture of happiness. Dan offers ten sovereigns to Father Kiely. The latter thinks, however, that such faithful servants should be made feel the value of their past ser-

vices by being married free. Dan is inexorable, as he believes Father Kiely isn't at liberty to make such a concession. Father Tom gives *carte blanche* to the curate, who solves the difficulty by handing over the sovereigns to Mrs. Cleary, who by her economical management saved much more than that amount for the Ballymore Presbytery. The wedding party is now on the road to Tom Hogan's, where the breakfast has been prepared by Mrs. Hogan, and where the subsequent festivities are to take place. The procession consists of seven side-cars, in addition to the cover-car—the latter containing the newly-married couple and a pair of pretty coquettish bridesmaids, with Jack Hogan as best man.

Jack, though a favourite with the girls, is a poor hand at love-making; he is so fond of horses that he has but little love for anything else. Not that Jack is unamiable, quite the opposite; no man more cosmopolitan. He is very like Arthur—good-natured, genial, unselfish. Why he should have been selected as best man he neither understands nor cares.

“Now, Jack, you must be at your best at the dance to-night,” suggests one of the fair members of the bridal party, “and you must take me out for the first set. You are too

retiring. All the girls admire you, and we'd all love to dance with you. With the respect everyone has for you, you ought to hold your head higher and be more independent."

"Independent, Lizzie! God forgive you. Who can be independent in this miserable country? Scarcely can we Irish blow our nose without authority from John Bull. We are simply in the gutter, and we are so degraded that, like the scourged dog, we are ever ready to lick the savage hand that wields the whip that bleeds our shoulders. Irishmen independent! Never, until our country becomes a separate kingdom. But, Lizzie, there goes my father. Wellington wasn't half so important at Waterloo. But there's one man my father is always talking about—Daniel O'Connell, Ireland's Liberator."

"But, Jack, what do you think of Parnell?"

"I simply worship him. He's a great leader: he hates England, and that's enough for Mr. Jack Hogan. But, Lizzie, will you take a fool's advice? Give up politics, and don't spoil your features."

"On one condition, Jack."

"Granted."

"That you'll dance the first set with me to-night."

"Yes, if Arthur doesn't."

“ Why so ? ”

“ Because I don't care for dancing, and Arthur loves it.”

“ But Arthur will be a priest, they say, in two years.”

“ What has that to do with a dance or two at Dan Cleary's wedding? Don't you be astonished if you see my mother and Arthur open the ball, just to put the company in good humour. And 'tis they that can perform the ceremony with grace and dignity. When it comes to the question of lifting a horse over a fence I'll give best to no one. Arthur's greatness lies in a different way. He's going straight for eternity. Wonder he hasn't got there already. Anyhow, with all his delicacy, we will be all sorry to lose him. He's the life and soul of the house. Wait till you hear him sing to-night. And if he doesn't do credit to some of our grand old Irish ballads I'll never ask you, Lizzie, for a kiss again.”

“ Oh, Jack ! ”

“ Oh, Lizzie ! ”

“ But I'd give anything, Jack, to have a dance with Arthur after all you've told me about him.”

“ Ha, ha ! Lizzie, I thought you would, and I'm afraid there's many another lassie of the same way of thinking as yourself.”

And Arthur does dance, and Lizzie has not been disappointed.

Till lately Lizzie had been a school teacher, but on the death of an affectionate uncle, who left her a big legacy, she gave up her position, and has come to live with a maiden aunt not far from Tom Hogan's. Only twice has she met Arthur. To-night she is delighted with his company and conversation. Their's is, indeed, a rare treat, with Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, Goldsmith, and a host of similar characters to keep them company. In fiction the little teacher is ahead of Arthur; but with poetry and with the essayists she is far behind. Between the music of the two violinists and the dancing and the charming conversation of his new acquaintance Arthur is beginning to fear lest he may have allowed himself to be forgetful of the sacred office to which for years he has been aspiring. After singing two or three songs he silently retires about 12 o'clock at night to his room, where he devoutly recited his beads and reads a chapter of the Imitation. He is accustomed to open the book and read the chapter that first meets his gaze. The following is the one that lies open now before him:—

“(DISCIPLE)—I will hear what the Lord God will speak to me.

“(Ps.)—Happy is that soul which heareth the Lord speaking within her, and from His mouth receiveth the words of comfort.

“Happy ears that receive the divine accents of the divine whisper, and take no notice of the whisperings of the world.

“Happy ears, indeed, which hearken to truth itself teaching within, and not to the voice which soundeth without.

“Happy eyes which are shut to outward things, and attentive to the interior.

“Happy they who penetrate into internal things, and endeavour to prepare themselves more and more by daily exercises for the attaining to heavenly secrets.

“Happy they who seek to be wholly intent on God, and who rid themselves of every worldly impediment.

“Mind these things, O, my soul, and shut the door of thy senses, that thou mayest hear what the Lord thy God speaks within thee.

“(CHRIST)—Thus saith thy beloved: I am thy salvation, thy peace, and thy life: abide in me and thou shalt find peace. Let alone all transitory things, and seek things eternal. What are all temporal things but deceit?

“And what will all things created avail thee?

“If thou be forsaken by thy Creator.

“Cast off then all earthly things, and make thyself agreeable to thy Creator, and faithful to Him, so that thou may'st attain to true happiness.”

Just as Arthur had finished his meditation and was about to retire to rest, his mother makes her appearance and tells him how anxious the wedding party are for another song or two from him.

His mother's simplest request is to Arthur equivalent to a command. He then and there makes up his mind to see the festivities through. He sings as many as five or six songs before morning, including “Paddy's Evermore,” “Songs of Our Land,” and “Who Fears to Speak of Ninety-eight;” and gives two recitations—“Rory of the Hill” and “The Sack of Baltimore.”

The maid that Bandon gallant sought is chosen for the Dey—
She's safe—he's dead—she stabbed him in the midst of his
serai;

And, when to die a death of fire, that noble maid they bore,
She only smiled—O'Driscoll's child—she thought of
Baltimore!

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A DROWSY CHAPTER.

FROM his sister and mother Arthur rarely conceals anything; and now, when sinister clouds are lowering around him, he feels himself secure only in their company. The four years after he took up his Latin grammar were to him years of grave anxiety. From the moment he entered St. Kevin's up to last night's amusement he was never for a moment doubtful about his vocation. To die would be more honourable than to turn back; though to resign himself to fate would be better for his soul's sake than become a priest with a doubtful mind about his vocation. With such perplexities is his brain oppressed as he lies dreaming in bed at ten o'clock, after the fatigue of the previous night. Suddenly awakening from his harrowing dreams at the gentle action of something upon the clothes about his neck, and throwing out his arms in a great fright, Arthur gratefully, though somewhat mournfully, exclaims: "Oh! thanks be to God, 'tis Mary. But no, 'tis only Captain." That faithful Irish terrier entertains for Arthur stronger affection

than he does for any other human being. Every morning, as soon as the kitchen door is opened, Captain takes his seat upon the chair beside the young student's pillow. There has he been accustomed to sit, sometimes even for hours, in watchful patience. This morning the poor fellow, because Arthur has been unusually late in rising, is steeped in sad bewilderment. So placidly has Arthur been sleeping that it is only a hardened heart would be so cruel as to blame the dumb attendant for solving the problem for himself in such a primitive manner. The four eyes gleefully meet. Captain's are sparkling with jubilation. Arthur's are beaming with gratitude. "Be off, Captain; give me thirty minutes to dress, put a few prayers together, and have breakfast, and after that you and I and Speed (the greyhound) will spend the day hunting the fox and hare together. But——

The best laid schemes of mice and men
Gang aft agley;
And leave us nought but grief and pain
For promised joy.

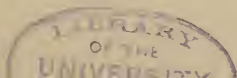
After breakfast a message comes to Arthur that his father wants him for a few moments. The petition is humbly granted. Last night's frivolities are, in all their unbecomingness,

categorically enumerated. Arthur silently admits his guilt. He is really sorry that his father's feelings should have been wounded, though he has too much common sense and too much humour to unduly grieve. As soon as his father is out of sight Arthur sets off, with his companions jovially jumping up on each side as high as his shoulders. During his absence a secret conclave is held between his father and mother. The former considers last night's conduct unpardonable. The latter stoutly disagrees.

"Though he gave me more trouble than all the children I ever reared, that's no reason I should turn against him. He was always delicate, and he's delicate still, and if the others were as sickly as he is they mightn't be a bit more patient. 'Tis my opinion they wouldn't be half as patient. I'd willingly bear twenty times over all the trouble I had with him when he was a child for all the fondness he has for me since he grew up. You ask his brothers and sisters what they think of him."

"Yes. Ask babies what they think of him. They are too inexperienced to know the difference."

"Too inexperienced, with two or three of them older than you and I were when we got married. If their opinions are worth nothing you have



only to go to Father Feehan or Father Kiely. Tom Hogan, let me tell you that if you continually find fault with every pleasant word he says and everything he does, or tantalise him much more, it is my belief that you'll soon have to order his coffin. What harm was there in talking and dancing last night with Lizzie Morris. Wasn't she the best educated girl in the barn, and even if she was once a school teacher, is that a crime? There's not a farmer's daughter in the district but if she had half her education or one-tenth of her fortune but would be twice as proud."

"Let us drop this nonsense."

And the nonsense ceased.

'Tis evening—one of those lovely autumn evenings—when the sun, like a fond lover, seems loath to leave, and, having reluctantly separated, bequeaths a delightfully protracted twilight. Arthur is home with a hare and two rabbits. He has had a grand day's sport, and, though he has had nothing to eat since breakfast, his first solicitude is about his dogs. Five carefully crisped potatoes, two raw eggs, a small quantity of bran, and about a quart of "ropy" milk, carefully mixed by the huntsman himself, constitute their supper. Having fed them he attends to himself.

“ Anything you like, mother, from rashers and eggs to a bit of beef or a red herring. I’m as hungry as a hawk and fit for frost nails.”

His dinner despatched, with hat and coat off Arthur is a competitor with a crowd of neighbouring young fellows going, after the day’s work, through a miscellaneously arranged athletic programme. The high jump has been soon notched to the student’s credit. In the long jump, as well as in the running hop, step and jump, he comes second. The weight-throwing is narrowed down to himself and his father. The latter is the much more robustly built, but advancing age is an unrelenting enemy to the buoyant elasticity of youthful activity. The son has had great practice almost daily in college, while his father, though once a noted “stone-thrower,” has of late years rarely indulged in the exercise, except to give the youngsters a “copy.” Arthur’s feelings are very similar to those of Matt Donovan in Knocknagow. Under different circumstances he would be more than pleased to allow the victory go by default; but for the credit of the rising generation, as a mild return for the morning’s paternal correction, and last, but not least, of all for the honour and respectability of his clerical aspirations, he strains every nerve to obtain the victory, and

comes out triumphant by a few inches. No one is more delighted with the result than Tom Hogan. Forgetful of last night's indiscretions he warmly extends his hand to Arthur, whom he styles the most athletic of all his sons.

"That's all right," replies Arthur, "but should I live to be as old as you, how far do you think that I at that age can put the weight? Not within eighteen inches of where you've put it."

And then that happy crowd dispersed delighted.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

AN IRISH FAIR DAY AND EMIGRATION.

IN the South of Ireland there is no town of the same size more remarkable for its weekly markets and monthly fairs than Brittas. On the first Monday of every month the place becomes a nondescript Bedlam through the uninterrupted unharmonious chorus from the powerfully-developed but undisciplined throats of the paradoxically dumb animals that, by their shining skins and fat sides and backs, make for many a poor man the important occasion so practically poetical.

From Johnstown, Galmoy, Ballybrophy, Loughmore, Ballycahill, Killenaule, Fethard, Clonoulty, Moyne, Moycarkey, and the adjoining districts the converging roads to Brittas sound on Sunday night with the rustically healthy notes of well-set and well-greased axles, hummingly bringing their respective and, from a certain point of view, respectable burdens to the common rendezvous. The destined spot reached, the snoring lungs of the previous night are let loose with all the avidity of so many

Shylocks on their warpath for their compound interest.

By daylight there is scarcely a vacant space in the main street. Quick as lightning creel after creel is appropriated, chiefly by "jobbers" from Cork and Waterford. By ten o'clock the unsold typify the solitary standing ears after the harvest has been stacked or the few grapes that remain on the vine tree after the vintage is gathered. Not being a mathematician I cannot make even an approximate guess at the amount that in such a short time has changed hands; but the sum must be a big consideration.

The following day the same town bears witness to a similar sight on a higher scale. From the bridge to the upper end of the long and exceptionally wide street there is hardly a foot of ground but is occupied by a biped or a quadruped, the latter averaging, individually, about five to one. The side walks are monopolised by the sheep, while the entire centre is taken up by the cattle, with the exception of a prescriptively privileged corner for the goats and donkeys. The horse fair, commencing at the foot of the bridge where the cattle fair terminates, abruptly turns its back upon the horned tribe, and independently canters, or trots, or walks its way in an opposite

line eastwards. It also retains absolutely to itself the street facing south, and running, somewhat circuitously, parallel with the river.

This morning between twenty and thirty young men and women left their Ballymore homes very early, and are now, with painful difficulty, slowly forcing their passage through streets blocked with horses, sheep and cattle. Recognised here and there by their friends, they are warmly saluted, and in two or three instances embraced, for all that mournful group are wending their way to the railway, soon to look their last on their blue Tipperary hills. The station, after struggling pressure, at length is reached. Confusion reigns supreme. The bellowing of the trucked cattle, the cries of the sheep for their scattered young, the piteous bleating of the lambs for their mothers, the boisterous accents of the cattle-dealers, intermingled with the groans and lamentations of the emigrants and their friends, would move a heart of flint to tears. Now and again from some quarter of the party is heard the pathetic question—"Is she coming? Is she coming? Oh! Nellie, Nellie, and you the last of all. All, all are gone now, and your poor old mother left without a child to give her a drink on her death-bed, and not one of the ten children I reared to

lay my dead body in the lonely grave and sleep beside me. One more embrace, and then good-bye for ever. There is, and there must be, another world where God's trampled poor will get their turn. Oh, Nellie, Nellie! if I thought there wasn't I'd never go on my knees again. Oh! but here she comes." The next moment the poor woman is in a swoon. Her sole remaining, but now departing, child is pale as death. Another second unaided she would have fainted; but, with a spring from a secluded spot, and regardless of the company's laws about their property, Arthur wildly snatches a saucepan from its moorings, fills it with water, supports the blanched girl, and in a tone of deep sympathy whispers—"Nellie, take it. It isn't much, but it's all I have."

As soon as he was recognised there was one wild outburst of agony from the whole emigrant cluster. Parents, brothers, sweet-hearts, sisters are deserted for Arthur Hogan's affectionate farewell. Boys and girls, young and old, they all adore him. They ardently struggle with one another to shake hands with him. Their desires are complied with. With burning tears he turns aside from the bleeding spectacle only to have his sorrow intensified. A side-car is being hurriedly driven towards the station. The

occupants, besides the driver, are Katie Gleeson and her uncle, an Irish-American priest, who is taking her to become a nun in an American Convent. Arthur patiently watches for his opportunity, and in the thick of the crush, with a warm shake hands and a religiously uttered "farewell," he slips into the hand of his ever reverently remembered and ne'er to be forgotten schoolmate the following simple verses :—

The day at last has come to part,
 And from my very inmost heart
 God's choicest blessings I implore
 Upon thee, though I never more
 Shall gaze upon thy face and see
 Imprinted there sincerity,
 And ev'ry quality that man
 In woman's features loves to scan.
 May each glad step you daily take
 Through life your pathway brighter make.
 May peace and quiet, social mirth,
 And innocence be yours on earth ;
 May faith, with her enchanting beams,
 And hope surround you in your dreams ;
 And when our days on earth are o'er,
 May we upon the distant shore,
 United, our Redeemer see,
 And Him adore eternally.

A moment later brothers and sisters are torn apart by the stalwart porters, parents and

children are separated, sweethearts dissevered,
the neighbouring hills re-echo the engine's whistle,
the train gaily glides along the polished rails
towards the southern capital, bringing with her
or leaving behind no sadder heart than Arthur
Hogan's.

CHAPTER XL.

“ MARY.”

“ Yes, mother.”

“ Have you ever seen Arthur so dejected ? ”

“ Never.”

“ What in heaven’s name can be the matter with him ? For the last two days he hasn’t spoken twenty words with me. He has spent this whole day about the castle and the churchyard. Let us milk the cows and feed the calves, and finish up as soon as we can, and you run down, like a good girl, and bring up Jim Daly and Bessie Morris, and as many of the boys and girls as you can, and leave the rest to me.”

“ Anything you like, but I think it would be better to let him have his own way. You know he has a strong will, and with all his kindness, if he should suspect that we want to rule him, he may get very annoyed and angry with us. You and I can do anything with him. With patience he’ll soon be all right. He knows and feels that he is not good-looking, and more than once has he told me that it is painful to him to see his face in the glass when he has to shave.

And if the poor fellow's face is a source of trouble to him, that's the very reason that we should be more careful. But if you think I ought to go, I'll be off at once."

And Mary goes.

Shortly after Arthur comes home.

"Come here, mother; close the door; sit down. I was never so sad in all my life. Ireland, from Malin Head to Mizen Head, will soon be an uninterrupted run for cattle and sheep, with Irish ideals enslaved to English appetites for Irish beef and mutton.

All day long, in unrest,
To and fro do I move,
The very soul within my breast
Is wasted for you, love!
The heart . . . in my bosom faints,
To think of you my queen,
My life of life, my saint of saints,
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
To hear your sweet and sad complaint,
My life, my love, my saint of saints,
My dark Rosaleen!

Woe and pain, pain and woe,
Are my lot, night and noon,
To see your bright face clouded so,
Like to the mournful moon,

But yet . . . will I rear your throne
Again in golden sheen ;

'Tis you shall reign, shall reign alone,
My dark Rosaleen !

My own Rosaleen !
'Tis you shall have the golden throne,
'Tis you shall reign, and reign alone,
My dark Rosaleen !

Over dews, over sands,
Will I fly for your weal ;
Your holy, delicate, white hands
Shall girdle me with steel,

At home . . . in your emerald bowers,
From morning's dawn till 'een,
You'll pray for me, my flower of flowers,
My dark Rosaleen !

My fond Rosaleen !
You'll think of me through daylight's hours,
My virgin flower, my flower of flowers,
My dark Rosaleen !

I could scale the blue air,
I could plough the high hills,
Oh, I could kneel all night in prayer
To heal your many ills !

And one . . . beamy smile from you
Would float like light between
My toils and me, my own, my true,
My dark Rosaleen !

My fond Rosaleen !
Would give me life and soul anew,
A second life, a soul anew,
My dark Rosaleen !

“ But we must be resigned. God has something great in store for the Irish race. But Ireland must bear the cross before she can wear the crown. We must submit to God’s providence, and place ourselves under the protection of the Blessed Virgin, our angel guardians, and great St. Patrick.”

That fond mother is as one struck dumb. The son continues—

“ Have you ever read the story of St. Patrick’s strivings on Mount Cruachan ? I have just come across a copy of it whilst “ fossiking ” through my uncle’s books. Shall I read it for you ? ”

“ Oh ! yes, Arthur.”

ST. PATRICK’S PRAYING FOR IRELAND

Then spake once more that courteous angel kind,
 “ What boon demand’st thou ? ” And the saint, “ No
 less

Than this, though every nation, ere that day,
 Recreant from creed and Christ, old troth foresworn,
 In pride of life the scandal of the cross
 Should flee, as once the apostles fled in fear,
 This nation of my love, a priestly house,
 Beside that cross shall stand fate—firm, like him
 That stood beside Christ’s mother.” Straightway, as one
 Who ends debate, the angel answers stern :
 “ That boon thou claimest is too great to grant ;
 Depart thou from this mountain Cruachan
 In peace, and find that nation which thou lov’st,

That like thy body is, and thou her head,
For foes are round her set in valley and plain,
And instant is the battle." Then the saint :
"The battle for my people is not there,
With them, low down, but here upon this height,
From them apart, with God. This mount of God,
And dying, I will leave a man elect
To keep its keys and pray my prayer, and name,
Dying in turn, his heir successive line,
Even to the day of doom."

Then heavenward speed
Victor, God's angel, and the man of God,
Turned to this offering ; and all day he stood
Offering in heart that offering undefiled
Which Abel offered, and Melchisedech,
And Abraham, patriarch of the faithful rae, e,
In type, and which in fulness of the times
The victim-priest offered on Calvary,
And bloodless, offers still in heaven and earth,
Whose impetration makes the whole church one. So
stood he offering
Till the eve, and still
Offered ; and as he offered, far in front,
Along the ærial summit, once again
Ran out that beam-like fiery pillar prone
Or sea-path sunset paved ; and by his side
That angel stood. Then Patrick, turning not,
His eyes in prayer, upon the west close held,
Demanded : "From the Maker of all worlds
What answer bringest thou ?" Thus the angel spoke :
"Down knelt in heaven the Angelic Orders Nine,
And all the prophets and the apostles knelt,

And all the creatures of the hand of God,
Visible and invisible, down knelt,
While thou thy mighty mass, thou altarless,
Offer'dst in spirit, and thine offering joined,
And all God's saints on earth, or roused from sleep,
Or on the wayside pausing, knelt, the cause
Not knowing; likewise yearned the souls of God.
And, lo! the Lord thy God hath heard thy prayer;
Since fortitude in prayer—and this thou know'st."
Smiling, the bright one spake, "is that which lays
Man's hand upon God's sceptre. That thou sought'st
Shall not lack consummation. Many a race,
Shrivelling in sunshine of its prosperous years,
Shall cease from faith, and, shamed through shameless,
sink
Back to its native clay; but over thine God shall the
shadow of
His hand extend,
And through the night centuries teach to her
In woe that song which, when the Nations wake,
Shall sound their glad deliverance; nor alone
This nation, from the blind dividual dust
Of instincts brute, thoughts driftless, warring wills,
By thee evoked, and shapen by thy hands
To God's fair image, which confers alone
Manhood on nations, shall to God stand true,
But nations far in undiscovered seas,
Fleece uncorrupted of the Immaculate Lamb
For ever; lands remote shall lift to God
Her fanes, and eagle nurturing isles hold fast
Her hermits' cells; thy nation shall not walk
Accordant with the gentiles of this world,
But as a chosen people wear the crown

Or bear the cross ; and when the end is come,
When in God's mount the twelve great thrones are
 set,
And round it roll the rivers, four, of fire,
And in their circuit meet the peoples three—
Of heaven and earth, and hell—fulfilled that day
Shall be the Saviour's word, what time He specified,
The Crozier staff forth from the glory cloud,
And swear to thee when they that with Me walked
Sit with Me on their everlasting thrones
Judging the twelve tribes of Mine Israel,
Thy people thou shalt judge in righteousness,
Thou therefore kneel and bless the land of Eire.”
Then Patrick knelt, and blessed the land and said :
“ Praise be to God, who hears the sinner's prayer.”

CHAPTER XLI.

A POETICAL DUEL.

THERE are eight priests and one clerical aspirant present. The place is Father Feehan's dining-room. The time eight o'clock, August 26th, 188-, and the occasion the celebration of Dr. M'Donald's eightieth birthday. The gathering is a most harmonious and genial one. While always conscientiously attending to the spiritual needs of the parish, Father Feehan is most thoughtful about the temporal welfare of his people as well. It is to this instinctive thoughtfulness is to be attributed Arthur's presence at the celebration. Before a wing is disturbed or a pig's cheek minimised, Father Cassidy is rolling along the conversational highway in his favourite carriage. Poetry has always been Father Cassidy's hobby. Rarely has he been obliged to play second fiddle with any of his clerical brothers in that department. With his well preserved ivory-like teeth appetizingly employed, his knife and fork at rest, he genially enquires of Arthur about the quantity and kind of poetry studied at St. Kevin's.

Arthur, as befits his age and place, humbly replies—"Except what is read during spare moments in the library and the poems set for the matriculation, the students, as a rule, dip no deeper into the subject. For our annual examinations we generally have a play or two of Shakespeare's and one of Scott's or Goldsmith's poems. This, however, does not apply to the students studying for the B.A. To obtain their degree they must be intimately acquainted with the classics and have a comprehensive knowledge of the chief works, prose and poetry, in the English language from the earliest times to the present day."

"And that's just as it should be. There is more wisdom and literary beauty in Homer, Horace, and Virgil than in all your Bacons, Carlyles, and slipshod Macaulays boxed together. I'm delighted to find your college doing justice to Shakespeare and Goldsmith. The one is the prince of dramatists and the other is probably the most popular all-round writer from Chaucer to Tennyson. The Wizard of the North shines as a novelist. As a poet, he is only a first-class versifier. Isn't it a pity that we Irish have never been able to produce a first-class poet?"

"It is; but our deplorable and circumscribed circumstances must be considered. No man

can whistle and chew bread at the same time. For years we had no power to give expression to our thoughts and feelings. Our ancient tongue was proscribed, and the stranger's language made a felony unless our faith were sacrificed for the foreign privilege. Since England invaded this country, Irishmen have been robbed and persecuted inhumanly and forcibly chained, neck and heel, to the grinding mill-stones of ignorance and slavery. And notwithstanding all her straits and persecutions Ireland has produced poets whose productions are not to be despised." (Applause.)

"*Concedo.* But where are your poets in comparison with those of England and France and Germany? We have no Shakespeare; we have no Milton; we have no Byron; we have no Burns; we have no one but Moore and Goldsmith and a few ballad singers."

"I hope you will forgive me, Father Cassidy, for candidly and fearlessly giving you my opinion. I don't consider any of those you have named as *idealistically* great poets. You can select very few pieces from them equal to Shelley's "Skylark," Keat's "Nightingale," Coleridge's "Love," Gerald Griffin's "Seagull," or Mangan's "Barmecides." I can quote for you from these and from numbers of poems written by Irish-

men and Irishwomen as noble passages and as lyrical couplets or single lines as you can cull from your aristocratic favourites."

"I'm sorry, my young friend, to see you excited. I accept your challenge."

All the guests are delighted. Their hopes and sympathies are all with Arthur. Apart from poetry, Father Cassidy is a grand character. Astride his hobby he is a poetical nuisance. The dear old Doctor is in his element. Up to seventy he worked like a slave, and always most successfully. At the suggestion of Father Kiely he has been appointed to act as judge and jury combined. No man better qualified for the position. For the last eight or ten years he has been spending five or six hours daily among his books. He loves poetry, and, gifted with one of God's sweetest blessings, a youthful heart, a youthful brain, and boundless sympathies with "youngsters." Needless to say, he inclines towards Arthur.

"Well, Very Rev. and Rev. Fathers, you have very kindly come at Father Feehan's invitation to celebrate my eightieth birthday. It seems a long time. To me it appears only like a span. But we must to business. I'm delighted to find the decks cleared for action, and, with two such combatants and such an appreciative

audience, I expect some rare rapier thrusts before the fight is over. I shall hold the scales evenly and judge justly. Now, Hogan has thrown out the challenge, Father Cassidy has taken up the gloves, and now let me call on Arthur Hogan to quote from memory any verses not containing more than twelve lines from any poem outside Father Cassidy's nominated authors.

Arthur answers—

Waking or asleep
 Thou of death must deem
 Things more true and deep
 Than we mortals dream,
 Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?
 We look before and after
 And pine for what is not,
 Our sincerest laughter
 With some pain is fraught—
 Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

(Applause.)

Father Cassidy—

Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition!
 By that sin fell the angels; how can man, then,
 The image of his Maker, hope to win by it?
 Love thyself last, cherish those hearts that hate thee,
 Corruption wins not more than honesty.
 Still, in thy right hand carry gentle peace,
 To silence envious tongues. Be just, and fear not,

Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,
Thy God's and truth's, then if thou fallest, O Cromwell!
Thou fall'st a blessed martyr.

(Applause.)

Judge: "Honours evenly divided. Forward,
Arthur! Anything this time under six lines."

Poor wand'ers of a stormy day!
From wave to wave we're driven,
And fancy's flash, and reasons ray,
Serve but to light the troubled way—
There's nothing calm but heaven!

"Give me your hand, Hogan," cries Father
Kiely; and across the table their hands are
almost glued together.

Father Cassidy toes the line.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour—
The paths of glory lead but to the grave

Chairman's decision—"Judgment reserved."

Next item, a patriotic poem charged with
abundance of fire and vigour. The competi-
tors are given five minutes to select their piece.
Before half the time is up Father Cassidy is
ready and upon his feet. With a rich baritone
voice he partly declaims and partly sings:—

Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled !
Scots wham Bruce has often led !
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victory !
Now's the day and now's the hour ;
See the front of battle lower !
See approach proud Edward's power—
Edward ! Chains and slavery.

Wha will be a traitor knave ?
Wha can fill a coward's grave ?
Wha sae base as be a slave ?
Traitor ! Coward ! turn and flee.
Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand or freeman fa ?
Caledonian ! on wi' me.

By oppression's woes and pains !
By your sons in servile chains !
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall, they shall be free.
Lay the proud usurpers low !
Tyrants fall in every foe !
Liberty's in every blow !
Forward ! let us do or dee !

Unanimous applause, in which the student heartily joins. Arthur, with a kind of far-off battle-field look in his eyes, takes the floor, and, courageously facing his ecclesiastical superiors, throws himself unreservedly into

every line. His voice is mellow, his intonation perfect, and with little recourse to the artificial niceties of the trained elocutionist he takes the place by storm.

THE IRISH HURRAH.

Have you hearkened the eagle scream over the sea ;
Have you hearkened the breaker beat under your lee ?
A something between the wild waves in their play
And the kingly bird's scream, is the Irish hurrah.

How it rings on the rampart when Saxons assail ;
How it leaps on the level and crosses the vale,
Till the talk of the cataract faints on its way,
And the echo's voice cracks with the Irish hurrah.

How it sweeps o'er the mountain when hounds are on scent ;
How it presses the billows when rigging is rent,
Till the enemy's broadside sinks low in dismay,
And our boarders go in with the Irish hurrah.

Oh ! there's hope in the trumpet and glee in the fife,
But never such music broke into a strife,
As when at its bursting the war-clouds give way,
And there's cold steel along with the Irish hurrah.

What joy for a deathbed, your banner above,
And round you the pressure of patriot love,
As you're lifted to gaze on the breaking array
Of the Saxon reserve at the Irish hurrah.

Father Kiely is beside himself with delight.
Father Tom is exultant. The Doctor feels as

if he were only twenty-five. The visitors are delighted. Father Cassidy's feelings have carried away his coolness. Affectionately grasping Arthur's hand: "I too had my day."

"*Perge, Arthur, procede et regna.*"

"Oh! this will never do," replies the chairman.

"We have still to deal with the couplets and single lines."

"*Quod dixi, dixi.* In fair fight has he won the belt. Give us another Irish recitation, Arthur, and add another decade to our lives."

AFTER DEATH.

Shall mine eyes behold thy glory, O my country?

Shall mine eyes behold thy glory?

Or shall the darkness close around them, ere the
Sunblaze break at last upon thy story.

When the nations ope for thee their queenly circle,
As a sweet new sister hail thee,
Shall these lips be sealed in callous death and silence
That have known but to bewail thee?

Shall the ear be deaf that only loved thy praises
When all men their tribute bring thee?
Shall the mouth be clay that sang thee in thy squalor
When all poets' mouths shall sing thee?

Ah! the harpings and the salvos and the shoutings
Of thy exiled sons returning,
I should hear, tho' dead and mouldered, and the grave damp
Should not chill my bosom's burning.

Ah ! the tramp of feet victorious ! I should hear them
 'Mid the shamrocks and the mosses,
And my heart should toss within the shroud and quiver
 As a captive dreamer tosses.

I should turn and rend the cere-clothes round me ;
 Giant sinews I should borrow,
Crying " O my brothers, I have also loved her
 In her loneliness and sorrow.

Let me join with you the jubilant procession ;
 Let me chant with you her story ;
Then contented I shall go back to the shamrocks,
 Now mine eyes have seen her glory ! "

" I met her twice," says Father Cassidy,
" poor Fanny Parnell. God rest her soul."

CHAPTER XLII.

A GLIMPSE OF AN IRISH LANDLORD.

“HOGAN must be crushed—crushed to death if necessary. I haven’t read my Bible for nothing. With the shepherd crippled, the sheep are ours to victimise them as we like. If the tenants hadn’t Hogan to lead them they’d have been long since on their knees crying out for mercy. Damn Hogan—damn the tenants! And I’ll be damned if I don’t give them fire and brimstone even before they get acquainted with these elements in their original regions. The low upstarts! Give me another bottle of port. Fill the tumbler up to the very brim, and my name isn’t Benson if Hogan isn’t doomed to-day to pay for all this through the nose. Intelligent! Of course he is. But what chance has intelligence and robbery against force and justice. I can command as many soldiers and policemen as I like. The Queen’s Government dare not refuse me. Were we only better united we Irish landlords would practically be invincible. The priests and the howling parliamentary demagogues preach a different

gospel. We'll soon teach Parnell and the priests another tune. Sergeant ? ”

“ Yes, your worship. ”

“ Cut the tails off two or three of my cows this very night, set fire to one of the hay-ricks, take as much whiskey as you can carry, but by ten o'clock to-morrow be sober enough to lodge a prosecution against the rebels. ”

“ But if we be caught, Mr. Benson ? ”

“ Caught be —— ! Do you know your duty ? Aren't you from the North, where you and every other decent Orangeman are trampled upon by the Papists ! Here you have the Catholics at your mercy, and you hesitate to grind them as a serpent's head between two mill-stones. Do as you're told, and get another stripe or lose your jacket. ”

The commission is executed ; the tails are savagely cut off ; the cows are barbarously gashed about the thighs, back and neck ; the hay-stack is aflame, and, with hearts selfishly steeled against every generous impulse of human nature, that dissolute despot and his two police protectors, all three gloriously drunk, help each other as best they can to bed ? The following morning their heads are aching, their hearts are hopping, but there are no qualms of conscience. Tom Hogan and his neighbours are

in a different condition. Their difficulty is with their consciences. Their religious dictates and their natural though illegal longing, not for revenge but bare justice, are in conflict. Which is to triumph? The supernatural sacrifice or the wild, just, but alas! comparatively helpless, cry for justice from legalised freebooters. Were the tenants atheists—which heaven be thanked they are not—the question could be easily answered. They have been taught Sunday after Sunday from the altar the precepts delivered by Christ upon the mount: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall have their fill. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. You are the salt of the earth. But, if the salt lose its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is good for nothing any more but to be cast out and trampled on by men. Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven. For so they persecuted the prophets that were before you. And if thy right hand scandalise thee, cut it off and cast it from thee, for it is expedient

for thee that one of thy members should perish rather than that thy whole body go into hell. You have heard that it hath been said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you not to resist evil; but if one strike thee on the right cheek, turn to him also the other. Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you."

Again—

"And forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors. For if you will forgive men their offences your heavenly Father will forgive you also your offences. But if you will not forgive men neither will your Father forgive your offences. Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth, where the rust and moth consume, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither the rust nor moth doth consume, and where thieves do not break through and steal. Be not, therefore, solicitous for to-morrow, for the morrow will be solicitous for itself. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. Judge not that you may not be judged. For what with judgment you judge you shall be judged. And with what measure you mete it shall be measured to you again. All things, therefore, whatsoever

ye would that men should do to you do you also to them. For this is the law and the prophets. Enter ye in at the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat. How narrow is the gate and strait is the way that leadeth to life. And few there are that find it."

In answer to a knock at Father Feehan's library door, Father Tom's stentorian "come in" resounds through half the house. The visitor is poor Tom Hogan. The threatening clouds have been thickening and approaching nearer and nearer day by day. The tenants are unable to pay their old rent. Their appeal for Griffith's valuation has been brutally spurned. What are they to do? Benson will be satisfied with nothing short of his pound of flesh. There is no Irish Portia to hold the scales. The die is cast; the weaker must succumb; and with British bayonets at his back Benson is bound to triumph.

"My poor man," says Father Tom as he beckons Tom Hogan into his big armchair, "I have never seen you so despondent. Let me know the worst, and I'll do my best."

"Well, Father Feehan, I'm afraid we're doomed. The landlord seems determined to

make an example of me as a lesson to all the others. If I had no one but myself to consider I could despise his threats. But the eviction will be death to my poor wife, whose forefathers have been living in the place for several generations.

“Courage, man alive! Courage! A big man like you to surrender without a struggle. You cannot be crushed unless Providence has so ordained it. If so, heaven will give you strength to bear it. But tell me everything.”

“Benson declares that unless I pay up the old rent, with legal and police protection expenses, he’ll take possession within ten days. On receipt of his demand I wrote to Arthur for his advice.”

“And what reply has he sent you?”

“Here it is—”

“ST. KEVIN’S, *November 9th*, 188—.

“MY DEAR FATHER,—In answer to your sad letter just to hand, I regret to say that I cannot conscientiously advise you what to do. My impression is that Benson would gladly accept the old rent from yourself and the other tenants. But I am anything but disposed to recommend this course. With such bad seasons and poor crops I think you cannot comply with the landlord’s demand without plunging yourselves

hopelessly into debt. I would fight the matter to the bitter end. Better any day to fall fighting than die of hunger on the public roadside.

“Yours ever affectionately,

“ARTHUR HOGAN.”

“P.S.—The darkest hour is that before the dawn.—A. H.”

CHAPTER XLIII.

AN ANXIOUS TIME.

ANOTHER ghastly outrage in Tipperary is the item flashed to the hostile Press of Great Britain. The landlord gets additional police. His sacred person must be protected. The tenants are pictured as midnight cowards, ruffians and criminals. Eviction, relentless and wholesale, is suggested as the only remedy. The landlord hesitates. There are some difficulties in the way. Difficulties or no difficulties Tom Hogan must be made bite the dust. Unless the old rent, within ten days, is paid Hogan shall be evicted. After consultation with his wife and family, and encouraged by Arthur's letter, Tom Hogan decides to ignore Benson's unjust demand. The sheep and cattle are driven away by night, to be cared for by friends living outside Benson's jurisdiction. The horses are sent to the Queen's County. Two skinny horses, purchased at a nominal price, are the only ones the Hogans have to plough the land for the crop. The hay, barley and oaten stacks are stowed away among the neighbours. All this to prevent their being

seized by the landlord for the rent. One milch cow is driven through the "parlour" and smuggled away in a back room, with the window closed up and an underground passage opened to give the poor dumb beast breath. For nine months this state continues.

Arthur longs to be at home for Xmas. His father has placed all the facts before him. Arthur comes home. Oh, the change! Desolation, helplessness, poverty, all but despair, triumphant. The only quiet, calm, living object there is the poor dumb cow, daily chewing the cud of resignation in her darkened prison, and giving her milk in overflowing buckets to her faithful keepers. For four weeks Arthur stays at home. Within eighteen months of being ordained, Sunday after Sunday sees him starting off, sometimes on foot with his brothers, oftener in the car with his parents and sisters, to Mass. He salutes every one. He is liked by every one. His salutation is worth getting, for there is something of a manliness and geniality about it that at once takes possession of the hearts of those addressed. Sometimes is he tempted to envy the lot of the boys and girls with whom he walks to Mass on Sundays. Their thoughts are seldom beyond their daily needs. His continually stretch out

over time's limits, far away over the troubled waters that lie between earth and the great unknown. His life, for the greater part, is in the land of dreams. Of a Sunday, when his brothers and sisters are enjoying themselves in the innocent dance or in the manly game of football or hurling, with his father leisurely walking about the fields, and in imagination counting his absent stock, Arthur's thoughts are either about his deceased relatives or his departed comrades, or the responsibility about to be undertaken by him, as a priest, for the salvation of the souls over whom God has condescended so soon to place him. At night, when all the family re-assemble, one would never suspect that Arthur had ever had a glimpse of dreamland. His supreme happiness lies in doing all in his power to make others happy. To-morrow he goes back again to college. His health is still as bad as ever. His people's prospects are dark as possible, but there is so much hopeful grit in the shake hands he gives them that they are fit to face the worst emergency. And the worst is looming thickly in the distance. Benson's revenge is thirsting for Hogan's blood. The landlord is willing to accept Griffith's valuation from the other tenants. From Hogan he will

be satisfied with nothing less than the old rent or the farm or, if necessary, Hogan's life. Arthur reveals all to Father Meehan.

"The picture is sad, but we must hope. To be strong we must suffer. It was not his earthly greatness, but his spiritual agonies, that made the great St. Paul's name famous throughout the world. All Christ's servants must suffer. As to how we would suffer, we haven't even the option. You are anything but an ignorant theologian. You know your theology, I shall not say as well as the two or three leaders of your class, but for all practical purposes you understand your business splendidly. To-morrow morning I'll say Mass for your people. Have courage. Write and tell them to hold out."

The Hogans accept the advice. The tenants to a man stand by them. The English mortgagees not having received their annual interest from Benson come down upon him like the proverbial wolf. The estate falls into their hands. Two English Commissioners are sent over to value the estate. Griffith's valuation is granted to all the tenants. Jack Hogan gets married to Lizzie Morris. The other members of the Hogan family are comfortably provided for. Mary, refused by Arthur to accompany him to Australia, vows that she will never get married

while her parents live. Time will wait for no man, howsoe'er important. Arthur is ordained. The morning has come for his departure. With fond affection he bids adieu to all.

"And now, mother, what advice have you to give me?"

"Oh! Arthur, I only wish that all the sons I ever had were going on the same mission."

"All right; anything else?"

"Only this, mind your prayers—and, for God's sake, when you're dead let us not be told that you had to be buried by the charity of the priests. Now, one last embrace on earth, and God be with you."

"And, my never-to-be-forgotten mother, with you too."

One by one they all embrace Arthur; his father last.

"Farewell! Your brothers and sisters may live to see you again, but that great pleasure I can never hope for. God be with you."

The last to whom Arthur bids adieu in Ballymore is Father Feehan. Big-hearted Father Tom! Well worthy of any position Cashel yet may give him.

"Take this, Arthur. A copy of the Pastoral Year. When hard pressed for a sermon it may come in handy. Good-bye. And now the only

advice I have to give you is—Be always a credit to your worthy parents, mind your prayers, and *hould* the money.”

ARTHUR AT TEMPLEMORE.

Old hills of Tipperary, ye are fading from my view ;
 Fond hills of Tipperary, to ye I bid adieu ;
 Be ever as ye have been, and may your fortune be—
 To stand or sink united for Irish liberty.

“ DUBLIN *September*, 188—.

“ MY DEAR SISTER,—Were I to write all I have felt and thought since I left Raheen I could put together a volume as large as a copy of the Four Masters. But, however strong the desire, I haven’t the time to do so. Dalton Williams must come to the rescue.”

ADIEU TO INNISFAIL.

Adieu ! The snowy sail
 Swells her bosom to the gale,
 And our barque from Innisfail
 Bounds away.
 While we gaze upon thy shore
 That we never shall see more,
 And the blinding tears flow o’er,
 We pray.

Mavourneen ! be thou long
 In peace the queen of song—
 In battle proud and strong,
 As the sea.

Be saints thine offspring still,
True heroes guard each hill,
And harps by ev'ry rill
 Sound free.

Tho' round her Indian bowers
The hand of nature showers
The brightest blooming flowers
 Of our sphere,
Yet not the richest rose
In an alien clime that blows,
Like the briar at home that grows,
 Is dear.

Tho' glowing breasts may be
In soft vales beyond the sea,
Yet ever, *gra ma chree*,
 Shall I wail
For the heart of love I leave
In the dreary hours of eve,
On thy stormy shore to grieve,
 Innisfail.

But mem'ry o'er the deep
On her dewy wing shall sweep.
When in midnight hours I weep
 O'er thy wrongs;
And bring me steep'd in tears,
The dead flowers of other years,
And waft unto my ears
 Home's songs.

When I slumber in the gloom
Of a nameless foreign tomb,
By a distant ocean's boom,
 Innisfail,
Around thy em'rald shore
May the clasping sea adore,
And each wave in thunder roar,
 " All hail."

And when the final sigh
Shall bear my soul on high,
And on chainless wing I fly
 Thro' the blue,
Earth's latest thought shall be,
As I soar above the sea—
Green Erin's dear to thee—
 Adieu !



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